



SERMONS FROM THE GOSPELS

VOL. II

**I AM
THE
LIGHT**

**OF THE
WORLD**

JOHN 8-12

MAR APREM

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SALZBURG TO BOSTON

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و محققان و نویسندگان و مترجمان

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SALZBURG TO BOSTON

(A Travelogue)

MAR APREM

1995

SALZBURG TO BOSTON

(English) (Travelogue)

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FOREWORD

It has given me great pleasure to read this book "Salzburg to Boston" and to write a foreword to it. The book is a travelogue by the Rt. Rev. Dr. Mar Aprem Metropolitan of the Chaldean Syrian Church at Trichur covering the period Feb-July 1995

The Chaldean Church, Trichur like all other Orthodox churches in Malankara, always had and still has more than its share of disputes and litigation. Their battles are nowadays fought in civil courts expensively but with little bloodshed since the secular government has a natural attitude to religious disputes except when they threaten public order. In countries of the Middle East where these churches originated and where their spiritual head offices are still located, a dispute between a Nestorian Church (like the Chaldean Church) and a Monophysite Church on the esoteric question whether Jesus Christ had two natures both Human and Divine or only one nature Divine, was argued in violent language full of threats and curses in the market place and settled only after fratricidal fighting. Fortunately the Chaldean church at Trichur is a small church with a peaceloving hardworking urban population which gives Mar Aprem sufficient leisure in spite of his religious and administrative functions to undertake occasional world tours which help him to keep his flock in touch with what is happening in the wide world.

The book is such delightful reading largely because Mar Aprem's style is simple and persuasive and he does

not try to engage in controversy with you or try to convert you forcibly to his point of view. He tries to inform and entertain you in a relaxed manner without any violence to your emotions and convictions. You open the book on any page at random to find yourself in interesting company with him and his relatives and friends in some part of the world listening to their friendly conversation on something or other, great or small.

The message of the book cannot be comprehended in an instant like a Laxman's cartoon or a short piece by Art Buchwald in the newspaper. If you are not able to finish the book at one sitting you will want to place it on your bedside table to nibble at and return to it the next night, to sample the numerous bits of information and anecdotes and relax over a medley of items about Indians in US, the wedding of a South Indian Chief Minister's adopted son, the foibles of the Chief Election Commissioner, the 1996 World Olympic Games, the bogus ecumenism of Syrian Christians and even the market price of eggs and medicinal drugs all of which take their turn for well informed and good humoured comments by Mar Aprem in this book.

The book is reminiscent of two great historical classics, Marco Polo's Travels and Samuel Pepy's diary. The former is based on the Venetian traveller's journey some 600 years ago from Venice to China via Central Asia and back to Italy via Malaya and India, covering perhaps 20,000 miles. It took him almost a whole life time to cover this distance in the same relaxed manner but thanks to modern inventions like the jet engined aeroplane Mar Aprem could cover a similar distance in less than six months. Some of the marvels described by Marco Polo

are obviously exaggerated and much of it is based on hearsay reports he had listened to. What Mar Aprém relates is less miraculous but fully true. Another reason why the book appeals to us is that we know he is one of us largely sharing the same likes and dislikes and we undergo participation and derive pleasure in a vicarious manner along with him.

The book in short is far more than a faithful record of one of his travels. Like Pepys' diary of 300 years ago, it is a work of art which reveals the author's capacity for selecting things great and small, essential or inconsequential which interest or entertain the ordinary reader and conveys to him the zest for life that propels the lives of all men at all places and times.

Happy reading to all those who buy, borrow or steal this book!

Madras

P. C. Mathew ICS (Retd.)

11-11-'95

Introduction

“The Coca Cola — Kentucky Chicken — Michael Jackson—MTV culture” is the way Mr. Vasant Sathe former Minister for Information and Broadcasting of the Indian Government, described the Western influence on the Indian youth today. The Indian people are warned against the “deculturisation” and “cultural Pollution” in the country through satellite television.

There is more than what we see on the satellite television. Of course, what we see in the “idiot box” in our homes is one side. There are many exemplary activities and saintly people in all countries. There are many humble people doing dedicated work in the religious and secular fields in America.

Despite the high percentage of divorce, there are couples who celebrate their golden wedding anniversaries and lead chaste lives. There are people who care for the poor. There are churches and organizations funding projects for the needy without strings attached.

There is always the ‘other side’ to the one depicted in the Hollywood movies or MTV culture. My visit was short, but helped me to see with appreciation some of the good in the Western cultures. I met cardinals, archbishops and ordinary people. I was in the scholarly conferences as described in the chapters on Vienna, Salzburg and Boston. I was present in some social events too.

I conducted Church services for the Assyrians in California, Canada and Chicago. I was present in the World Malayalee Convention and was in the company of my Kerala compatriots, both Christian and Hindu.

This travelogue *Salzburg To Boston* is an account of my three foreign trips in the year 1995. Instead of writing three separate books I decided to make it three in one. When trips came one after another I did not get time to sit down and write this travelogue. I write each word in long hand and not dictate to a stenographer or a dictaphone. Some day I may have the luxury or comfort of a computer.

The first trip was in February 1995 to Vienna and Salzburg. The second trip was in June to England, Canada and the U. S. A. The third trip was in August to Washington, Chicago and Boston. The details are given in the respective chapters chronologically. My intention was to record an accurate account of the things I had seen and the people I had met.

When I was in Washington I watched on TV O. J. Simpson trying to fit the blood-stained gloves onto his hands. A lot of people spent nine months watching the trial on TV. Actually I had written about O. J. Simpson in my last year's travelogue *Oxford to Austria*. Although I had not visited the U. S. A. in 1994, I watched on TV in Germany in June 1994 the police chasing Simpson through the streets of Los Angeles. Now the not-guilty verdict of the Jury has come in October 1995 and it has kicked up controversies about racism and the money power in getting or delaying or denying justice.

A detailed outline of each chapter is given at the end of this book. This will help readers to make easy references. The absence of an index will be remedied to some extent by these final pages.

This book is not a literary master piece. I do not envisage accomplishment of a literary master piece. Yet I attempt to produce travelogues because they introduce other countries and their people to my readers. I have also added the current Church History in my narratives of Churches or conferences.

My gratitude is immense to Mr. P. C. Mathew I. C. S. (Retd.), who wrote an excellent foreword to my mediocre attempt. He is one of the few surviving members of the prestigious Indian Civil Service which gave shape to the present I. A. S. (Indian Administrative Service) after India's independence. His well studied remarks add to the worth of this work.

I am also grateful to Mr. P. V. Mathew of Ernakulam, an Engineer who took to research and writing in recent years, who came forward to publish this work. He is a relative of his name sake who wrote the foreword. Mathew (omitting a 't' from the Biblical spelling), Thomas, Abraham, Anthony, and George are the top five names among Syrian Christians in Kerala.

Fr. T. O. Ignatius of the Mar Timotheus Birth Centenary Technical Training Centre, Trichur has helped me as usual in correcting the proof sheets to reduce the number of typographical errors that often creep into most books printed in Kerala in the letter presses.

The Mar Narsai Press, founded by my predecessor Mar Abimalek Timotheus Metropolitan in 1926 has done a superb job in printing the cover in multi colour in their recently acquired Offset Press.

Post Script

Making 23 foreign trips during the past 27 years after taking charge in Trichur in Oct. 1968 is not a large number. Pope John Paul II made 68 foreign trips in the past 17 years since he became Pontiff in 1978. Many marvel at his capacity to travel as we realise that he is 20 years older than I am.

I do not know how many Popes have made so many foreign trips as the present Pope. Among the 263 popes before him only 18 popes have completed 17 years of service as the supreme Pontiff of the Roman Catholic Church. He is the 19th pope to enter the 18th year and many people guess that he will enter even the 21st century. By that time he might complete 100 foreign trips.

Trichur-680 001
26 October 1995

MAR APREM

CHAPTER 1

Again in Vienna

On 22nd February 1995 I rushed to Cochin airport. As the checking counter would be closed half an hour before the departure of the flight I was supposed to report, by 11.25 a. m. the latest. As I left Trichur at 9.15 a. m. by car, I told my driver that we would reach the airport at 11.15 a. m. as two hours was more than enough to cover the 80 kilometers distance from Trichur town to Cochin airport.

The students were going to school at 9.15 a. m. Classes in the schools in Kerala begin at 9.30 in the towns and 10 a. m. in the rural areas. The government offices and the bank begin to function at 10 a. m. Therefore roads are crowded from 9.15 to 10 a. m. Although we are able to drive at 80 kms speed we needed two hours to cover 80 kms distance to the airport.

We took a bye pass before we reached the Cochin city as the traffic inside the city could delay our journey. We managed comfortably within our limit. At 11 a. m. I announced that we have to cover the distance in just 15 minutes, and reach the airport as scheduled.

Road repairs in the final lap of our journey began to slow us down. Owing to the traffic jams the final lap

took us 35 minutes instead of the estimated 15 minutes and we reported at the counter at 11.35 a. m. Mr. John Varghese, the ever-obliging staff of my travel Agency PL World Ways, was impatiently waiting for me. We rushed to the checking counter of the Jet Airways. Without any complaint they issued the boarding pass. If it were the Indian Airlines, the Government domestic airline, they would have cancelled the ticket at 11.25 a. m., thirty minutes prior to the scheduled departure of the flight, as per the rules. Had the Jet Airways, a private operator, stuck to the rules it would have caused a lot of headache to me and to my travel agent.

At Bombay I had several hours before the midnight flight. Therefore I went to the residence of the proprietor, Popular Automobiles at 14th Road, Khar in Bombay, about 15 minutes drive from the domestic airport. After my afternoon *Siesta* and conversation with Mr. K. P. Timothy and family I was taken to the international airport at Sahar around 10.30 p. m.

After obtaining the Boarding Pass I began to finish my work i. e., writing letters etc. and posting them before departure from India. Otherwise the postage will cost more and there will be unnecessary delay,

At the appointed time around 1. 30 after midnight the Alitalia flight bound for Rome began to move along the runway. We expected dinner to be served soon after we were airborne. But the aircraft stopped moving. It was brought back. We knew that the aircraft needed some repair. But mechanics were not available at that unholy hour. Only in the morning the technicians came. Within a short time technical flaw was rectified

and we took off. As we did not take-off till morning, we did not get any food. Some passengers were hungry and angry at the delay. But it is no use being impatient when it is a technical snag. We cannot repair an engine in midair.

As a result of the delay of around 6 hours we were late in Kuwait as well as in Rome. The delay in Kuwait did not bother us because our onward journey was in the same aircraft. But when we reached Rome we had a problem. Our connecting flight to Vienna had departed. We should wait till next day. But Alitalia was kind enough to transfer us to Austrian Airlines so that we could go to Vienna the same day.

Over the telephone I contacted the office of the Pro-Oriente in Vienna to state that I would arrive only at 10.30 p. m., owing to the late arrival in Rome. It was only one-and-a-half hour flight from Rome to Vienna. Mrs. Tournino who works in the office of the Pro-Oriente was waiting for me at the Vienna airport.

The immigration people could not understand why my visa was different from the normal. They checked and took my passport inside the room. I was left alone after all the passengers had passed through the immigration gate. I waited alone not for any default on my side, but owing to the difficulty of the immigration authorities to recognize the genuineness of my visa issued by their embassy in Delhi. After some time I asked, "Any problem?" No reply. I did not know what the problem was. Perhaps my face with a beard gave the look of a terrorist. I should have thought that it gives a pious look. But the line that separates piety

and cruelty is thin, as far as outward appearance is concerned.

Good things should not go unacknowledged. The Austrain Consulate in New Delhi had issued the visa for me not only free of cost (gratis) but for a duration of six months till August. If I go to Vienna for the next meeting in June I do not apply for visa again. Actually I verified it at the time of departure to make sure whether I could enter Austria once again before August '95 or would the visa expire with my present entry and exit. They clarified it saying that I could go to Austria many times till the validity of the present visa expires. The visa did not state whether it is a single entry or double entry or multiple entry till August '95. It can be any of these categories. I hope and pray a different interpretation will not be given when I attempt to enter the same gates in June, if some other official who entertains a different interpretation is on duty.

On 24 June the Pro-Oriente had arranged a public lecture where Bishop Mar Bawai Soro from the Assyrian Church and Fr. Franz Bowen of the White Fathers in Jerusalem read papers. Fr. Bowen wrote his paper in French and read the German translation. I looked at the English translation of the text. We did not have interpreters.

Bishop Bawai Soro delivered his speech in English in which language he had prepared it. The audience followed the German translation distributed to them. Bishop Bawai Soro is fluent in English (or American) as he lived only 20 years in Iraq and its vicinity and from the age of 20 to 40 in Canada and the U. S. A. Having

served the Assyrian diocese of Western U. S. A. for ten years, living in San Jose, California, now he is free from diocesan responsibilities. He is general secretary for the Inter-Church Relations of the Assyrian Church of the East. He is planning to do his doctorate at the Anjelicum in Rome beginning with October this year.

After the lecture I met Prof. Radhas, Dean of the Protestant Faculty at Vienna University. When I was introduced to him I told him that I thought that I had met him in his office in June 1990 when I came first time to Vienna to speak on Nestorians at the Pro-Oriente symposium. He replied that it may have been his predecessor if it were in 1990. After going to my room I checked my travelogue entitled *To Germany Via Vienna* and discovered that it was Prof. Radhas himself I had met in the Dean's office. Yes, my memory is not good as it is used to be. Or, my memory is as bad as that of Prof. Radhas who was sure that we had not met before.

Fr. Hieronymous an old bearded priest greeted me and reminded me of my visit to his abbey, the Niederalteich Abtei, in Germany in June 1977. His white beard indicated that he was much older than I am. Still he recalled that I had attended their prayer in that ancient Benedictine monastery and had stayed there as guest of Fr. Ephrem Eissing who was a Syriac scholar. I told him that I had heard of the passing away of Fr. Eissing. Fr. Hieronymous said that he and other monks had come to this meeting from Germany to see me. When I stayed there I wrote a few pages of my travelogue sitting on the chair where the Empress used to sit.

Dietmar W. Winkler from the institute for *Liturgiewissenschaft* of Karl-Franzens University in Graz (near Vienna)

had come to meet me for a different purpose. Mar Narsai Press had sent him 3 copies of Vol III of Hudra instead 3 volumes of Hudra. So he had brought the extra copies of Vol III and I exchanged them with Vol I & II of Hudra which I had carried there as Magister Winkler had telephoned from Graz to Trichur before my departure to do this exchange to rectify this mistake committed by Mar Narsai Press last July.

I do hope that the cycle is complete. First I got a telephone call from Dr Daniel Odisho of Cardiff, England to state that he got 3 copies of Vol II. Then I heard from Mr. J. T. Waghorne a lawyer in Dallas, Texas that he got 3 copies of Vol I and now through telephone from Graz, Austria Winkler told me that he had got 3 copies of Vol III.

The Manager of the Mar Narsai Press, Trichur assures that he placed these three sets properly in front of the binder who did the packing. I wonder who shuffled it. I apologize for the inconvenience and irritation it must have caused to my three friends in different parts of the world. What can one do with three copies of the same volume?

After the lecture and refreshments, we went down to the restaurant. That place has the speciality for chicken, two kinds of preparations. I did not bother to know the difference between the two kinds of preparations as I do not eat meat. I felt that the chicken was bigger than what I had seen others eating. Since I do not eat meat after becoming bishop in 1968 I was supplied with a vegetable dish. I must honestly state that the vegetable dish was very tasty. In Europe the number of vegetarians is increasing for health reasons.

On 25 February, we had our meeting of the Syriac commission formed at the Beirut meeting held in the University of Kaslik in September 1994. I could not go to Beirut as I was not given a visa on the ground that my invitation sent by Pro-Oriente had not been endorsed by the Lebanese government. Visa is a problem to Indians more than to the Americans and the Europeans. I hope and pray one day all citizens on planet earth could travel freely on all countries of the planet without the restrictions of the visa.

The Syriac Commission meeting planned the topics and decided on the names of paper readers of the forthcoming symposium in Vienna in February 1996. We realised that there are several topics such as ecclesiology, liturgy, etc. to be studied in addition to Christology in order to clear the misunderstandings that separated the Assyrian Church nicknamed Nestorian from the rest of the Christendom.

My friends Bishop Michael al Jamil, Bishop Matar, Metropolitan Ibrahim Mar Gregorius of Aleppo (Syria) Fr. Issac Zako of Mosul, Iraq and others were there. Fr. Geevarghese Chediath was the only Indian there. We reported about the developments that took place in our respective Churches since June 1994.

After our next Symposium scheduled for February 1996 we hoped that we could meet in June 1997.

Since our schedule in Vienna was not crowded I got time to learn by heart, the seven "I am" sayings of Jesus found in the Gospel of St. John. I had studied these seven sayings in several languages. As I saw a German Bible in my room I memorised the following seven sentences.

Ich bin das Brot des Lebens	6 : 35
Ich bin das Licht der Welt	8 : 12
Ich bin die Tur	10 : 9
Ich bin der gute Hirt	10 : 11
Ich bin die Auferstehung und das Leben	11 : 25
Ich bin der Weg und die Wahrheit und das Leben	14 : 6
Ich bin der wahre Weinstock	15 : 1

On Sunday 26 February 1995 some of the delegates from the Syriac Commission of Pro-Oriente attended the Syrian Orthodox service in the Church next to the Exertien und Bildunghaus at Lainzer Strasse 138 in Vienna West where we were staying. One of the members of the Syriac Commission, Mar Ibrahim Gregorius, Metropolitan of Aleppo, was the celebrant. Fr. Dr. Immanuel Aydeen, the local Episcopal Vicar and a dozen deacons assisted.

Severios aged eight read the litany. He looked like a six-year-old boy. He recited the litany beautifully attracting the attention of the parishioners as well as the visitors like us. After the service we all congratulated this little boy. I have often wondered what the reaction of the worshippers in the Synagogue of Nazareth was about 2000 years ago when a 12-year-old boy, Jesus, the son of Carpenter Joseph read from the scroll of Isaiah given to him. May this young boy of eight grow in grace and wisdom and be an example to others at a time when some doubting Thomases speculate that in the 21st century youngsters will be far away from the religious services especially in the affluent western countries! The Christians from Syria as they sojourn in Europe keep the

traditional worship practices in the language of their forefathers.

Immediately after the service in the Syriac language, the Indian Syrian Orthodox priest, Fr. Joseph Zachariah began the same liturgy in Malayalam. Fr. Zachariah is doing his Ph. D. in Vienna. He had come to listen to my talk in Vienna on 18 June 1990. Later in June 1994 I had occasion to meet him during the Pro-Oriente meeting. He is expected to earn his doctorate from Vienna and return to India to teach in the Syrian Orthodox Theological Seminary in Vettikal near Mulunthuruthy, Kerala. Indian Christians scattered all over the world worship in their mother-tongue Malayalam and keep their faithful close to the original traditions of their forefathers. The second and third generation may not be able to worship in the mother-tongue of their mothers as they are born and taught in different countries.

During the Syrian Orthodox service there was a special memorial service for Dr. Theodor Piffl Percevic, a former Federal Minister who had succeeded Cardinal Konig as the President of Pro-Oriente. As Metropolitan Mar Gregorius had known him well personally, he spoke some words of gratitude to God for the life and witness of Dr. Percevic through his presidency of Pro-Oriente. Alfred Stirnemann, present President of Pro-Oriente, the sister of Dr. Theodore Percevic and others were in the Church.

On Monday 27 February some of us wanted to see the videotape of the signing of common Christological Declaration between Mar Dinkha IV and Pope John Paul II. As the video at the Jesuit House where we were residing

did not work properly Fr. Immanuel Aydin invited us to his house. We went there to watch the video.

The parsonage of this Syrian Orthodox priest from Turabdin in Turkey is a spacious one. He told us that the 3-storeyed parsonage as well as the church were given to the Syrian Orthodox church by the Christian generosity of Cardinal Konig, the 90-year-old former Archbishop of Vienna.

Lydia, the priest's wife and their daughter Nahrin (a typical Assyrian name for girls which means rivers) entertained us with the warm Assyrian hospitality. Being diabetic I was abstaining totally from fruits for a few days. I ate an orange saying to myself, "I am going to have an insulin injection soon after and hence it doesn't matter much."

Fr. Aydin had his licentiate in theology from Rome *summa cum laude*. Then he took his doctorate from Vienna University. I am glad that the clergy of the ancient churches are getting educated. Priesthood is no more the profession of those who cannot pass any academic examination.

The Syriac dictionary written by Bishop Thoma Audo which we use in India is an old copy. Moreover it is an oversized book. In Fr. Aydin's library I could see two recent editions of the same book. It is cut to sizes. One is called the *Syriac Dictionary* by Thomas Audo. The other is titled *Treasure* of Syriac language. One book was reprinted in Holland and the other was reprinted in Sweden. Although the outside cover differed when I checked inside I realised that both were photocopies of

the old edition. I do not know why one titled it Dictionary and the other called it Treasure. Anyhow the title did not matter much as long as the inside is the same.

Perhaps the publisher in Sweden did not know that the Assyrians in Holland were reprinting the same book. Or, deliberately the second person wanted the title to be different. Readers should not waste their precious money by buying both the Dictionary and the Treasure, as both are one and the same book written by the well known East Syriac scholar of the previous generation. Thoma Audo was a bishop in the Chaldean Catholic Church. Perhaps he was the nephew of the controversial Chaldean Patriarch Mar Joseph Audo IV who had sent to India Mar Thoma Roccas Metropolitan in 1861 and Mar Elia Yohannan Mellus Metropolitan in 1874 A. D. These two Metropolitans were my predecessors in Trichur and had served at the Marth Mariyam Cathedral in Trichur where I have been serving during the past more than 27 years.

CHAPTER 2

Salzburg

Austria has two Archbishopsrics—Vienna and Salzburg. Salzburg is an ancient city with beautiful buildings. So I decided to include a trip to Salzburg. As the Pro-Oriente meetings were over on 27 Feb. I was free to go to Salzburg on the 28th.

Prof. Peter Hofrichter had visited me in Trichur in February 1994 with a group of students from the University and had offered welcome to his University during one of my future trips to Europe. In June 1994 after Pro-Oriente meetings I had planned to go to Germany and catch a flight from Amsterdam as it was a KLM flight.

I informed Prof. Hofrichter that I had two free days this time and I would like to visit his city. He kindly made arrangements for my hospitality in Salzburg. Moreover he told me that he had arranged for Bishop Mar Bawai Soro to give a lecture in the University on 1 March, and there was also a Pro-Oriente meeting on 2nd March. Both were talks on the Assyrian Church and my presence would fit in both events.

Bishop Mar Bawai changed his plan to fly from Vienna to Salzburg. Instead, he would travel by train along with me. The train journey took only 3 hours and

20 minutes and there were trains every hour. Trains fly from the heart of the city to the heart of the other city. If we fly, we have to go to the airport outside Vienna and after arrival in Salzburg make a long journey to the town. Moreover you can save the security-check of the baggage and the person unavoidable if one flies. If one takes the train, nobody bothers whether one's baggage contains explosives or drugs. Perhaps criminals and terrorists fly by plane and peace-loving people take the train!

The logic of my argument may be absurd. But in fact, the officials do not bother you in the trains. I hope the criminals will not get new idea from my above observation. I hope and pray that we could travel by air, sea, road or railroad without the security-check. In India in all domestic airlines our check-in baggages would not be loaded in the aircraft until the passengers identify their own baggages and produce the baggage receipt before boarding. Every year the inconveniences increase. Rarely would one security officer look at me and let me pass without laying his hands on me to verify what is inside my colourful episcopal gown.

Our stay in Salzburg was in the Benedictine monastery. Fr. Petrus Eder O. S. B. who had attended the Pro-Oriente symposium in Vienna in June 1994 was there to receive us. Prof. Hofrichter who had taken Bishop Mar Bawai and me from the railway station to the Benedictine abbey gave us one hour for our afternoon rest before he returned to take us around this beautiful city.

Our first visit was to the Cathedral not far from the monastery where we were staying. There were groups of people touring the city. It is indeed a beautiful city.

Hans Weigel had proudly and truly stated, "Salzburg is the beauty of art and scenery in their most basic form, immediate, direct, overwhelming once you know Salzburg, other cities will have hard time with you."

The Cathedral in the present form had been completed only in 1628. The Romanesque cathedral had been destroyed by fire in 1598 A. D. When it was in flames Archbishop Wolf Dietrich said, "If it burns let it". This Archbishop was deposed 14 years later. He spent the last six years of his life imprisoned in Fortress Hohensalzburg. He was buried in his own mausoleum in the Sebastian cemetery,

Santino Solari from Upper Italy became the architect of this first monumental Baroque building north of the Alps. Archbishop Wolf Dietrich's successor Archbishop Paris Lodron had celebrations for 8 days for the consecration of the rebuilt cathedral. It was right in the middle of the Thirty years war. A magnificent 52- voice mass was performed at this consecration.

In October 1944 American bombs destroyed the dome of this cathedral. Thomas Bernhard described that bombing "as if a terrible bleeding wound had been torn into the gigantic building that dominates the lower city." The dome was restored in 1959. It received the biggest bell in the German speaking area weighing 32 tons with seven silver bells.

As we walked inside the Cathedral admiring its architectural beauty a man in black suit came near the altar to verify whether the Cathedral clergy had placed a black cloth on the altar to signify the Lent season which

was to begin the next day i. e., Ash Wednesday. Prof. Hofrichter introduced us to him. We were scheduled to meet him later. The Archbishop expressed his willingness to receive us in his residence at once as the appointment given to somebody prior to ours had not taken place.

Archbishop George Eder walked with us to his Residence not far from the Cathedral. As it was the eve of Ash Wednesday his staff had gone on leave. He was alone to open the doors (There are many, I did not count how many,) and operate the lift (elevator in America) and receive us. To be available to the visitors is a virtue. When I open the door or attend the phone in the Metropolitan's Palace in Trichur, my people advise me against it. I do not believe that greatness, consists of the unnecessary formalities and paraphernalia,, except on some ceremonial occasions. But in private audiences we do not have to be 'burdened' by too much protocol.

As I had no previous hint as to what kind of person he is, I decided to begin our conversation by presenting him my last four joke books, the first one being out of print. One of his followers later expressed a doubt whether such a serious archbishop would ever laugh. Perhaps, in private, he must have laughed while reading these books.

The Archbishop appeared to me a very loving and courteous person. He is not a Cardinal like the archbishop of Vienna. Yet Salzburg is a prestigious archbishopric. Some of his predecessors were princes.

Die Salzburger Armenbibel (The Salzburger Poor man's Bible) was presented to Bishop Mar Bawai and

myself by the Archbishop. He gave us gold-plated beautiful crosses. The archbishop enquired about our faith and was interested to know the attempts by Pro Oriente to study the common things that unite us.

“You are the funny bishop?” asked a young lady who saw me, as we returned from the Archbishop’s Residence. She was one of those who had visited me in Trichur in February 1994. I told her that I had published one more joke book since they had visited me in Trichur.

Another clergyman greeted us. He is the general vicar of the Archdiocese. He was also professor of Canon Law.

A group of youngsters looked at me and laughed. They thought I had “dressed up” in this red cassock only to celebrate the Ash Wednesday’s eve, the festivities. People had painted their face and put a funny appearance. They thought I had worn this “funny dress” to attract the attention. Like a Santa Claus who comes for Christmas.

The same evening at 7.30 p. m. there was a musical performance at the Great Hall in the University. Jordi Savali who was born in Spain in 1941 was performing on his Viola. Brian Feehan accompanied with his Barock guitar and Michael Behuingar with Cembalo. This is the first time I was attending a musical performance. I am not competent to comment on the quality of the concert. But Bishop Soro was sorry that we got into this programme. At the interval he said that he didn’t feel comfortable with the performance especially the accompaniment of the Piano. So we decided to get up and get out. I wonder what my audience had thought of my

performance in a Town Hall in a little town in Belgium in 1988 when I played *Sitar*, the Indian instrument, without the accompaniment of *Tabla* or any other instrument. As I looked at the full attendance in the town hall I had realised playing sitar was not as simple as preaching a sermon.

On March 1 there was the lecture in the University. Bishop Mar Bawai Soro was the speaker. After the lecture, at the question time two professors who were present in the hall namely Fr. Ansgar Paus O. S. B., Prof. of Philosophy and Fr. Gerhardt Winkler, Cistercian, Professor of Church History, began to ask questions. They were intelligent questions indeed. Other participants did not ask many. Later I was told of the tradition there. When the professors ask questions the students usually abstain from raising questions.

We went to see Maria Plain. We could see Germany with its mountain peaks covered with snow. Maria Plain is a pilgrim church. Many people go there often. It dates back to the end of the 17th century. "Mary with the child Jesus" is a miraculous painting there. It remained undamaged when Sweedish troops burnt down the Bavarian village of Regen during the Thirty Years' War. In 1779 Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart wrote the "Kroenugsmesse" (Coronation Mass) for the ceremonial coronation of this painting. There are other paintings by Johann Martin Schmidt.

We saw the beautiful paintings in the Church and the monastery. Fr. Petrus asked the Benedictine monks in the monastery whether we could peep into their treasures, i. e. golden chalices and other eucharistic

vessels studded with jewels donated by women after a safe delivery, as an expression of their gratitude to God. Two old monks couldn't open the safe where more expensive vessels are kept. We could see it when the young Fr. Petros helped the old monks. Vestments used by the departed clergy had been preserved there. When we searched for the restaurant there, it was found closed for renovation. So we returned to the monastery where we live for lunch.

"He is the most important person next to the abbot in this monastery" said Fr. Petros pointing to the cook who served food for us. He must be right. I must record that the food was good.

"If this is not tea, bring me another", said Bishop Bawai. As all the monks were drinking coffee for breakfast, Bishop Bawai preferred tea to coffee. Rev. Petros want to get tea for both of us. Meanwhile Bishop Bawai noticed that there was a special flask on the table; he thought that the tea had arrived. So we both drank from it. It was different from ordinary coffee. It was special coffee without caffeine for one of their monks who could not consume regular coffee. We thought it did not taste like coffee. So it could be tea. But when the real tea arrived on the table they noticed that we both were enjoying their special coffee. I was reminded of a man who did not know the difference between tea and coffee replying to the question, "Tea or Coffee?", "If what I am drinking now is tea, give me coffee. If it is coffee, give me tea."

We had supper in the home of Prof. Hofrichter. Mrs. Hofrichter prepared us a vegetarian meal as the lent had begun that day.

The parish priest was present for the supper. He presented a book on the history of Salzburg written by Prof. Franz Ortmer. Although it is in German and I am not fluent in that language, I found the book useful as it is well illustrated.

Pro-Oriente had arranged a session that evening. The attendance was poor. They said most of the people had gone to the restaurant to eat fish as it was Ash Wednesday and the believers had to abstain from meat. It was a "fish day" to the Catholics in Austria.

It will be a grave omission on my part if a few words are not recorded here about my host Professor Dr. Peter Hofrichter who is Professor of Church History at the University of Salzburg. Fr. M. O. John of the Orthodox Theological Seminary in Kottayam did his doctorate under him on the topic of Cosmas Indicopleustes, the traveller to India, who wrote *Christian Topography* in Greek. His visit was around 525 A. D. His work is one of the earliest historical evidences of the existence of a flourishing Christian community in the south west coast of India, in the early period of the Christian era.

Prof. Peter Hofrichter is an active and expert member of the Pro-Oriente in Vienna. He has deep knowledge about the early period of christianity. He gave me an English translation of his well researched article written in German under the caption "The Apostolic Missions in Syria and the Origins of the Christian Church." He is a Catholic, but not a monk or a priest. He is a layman. I saw computer, with Syriac fonts not only in his office in the University, but also in his house. He does not look like an old man, but he proudly states that he is already a grandfather.

His conclusion in the above article is useful to the readers, and hence is quoted below:

"The Jesus movement had originally developed in Judaea. But the Petrines and Paulines and the Catholic church of the antiquity have their roots in Syria. It was Syria, where Christianity obtained its final form, which continues to live in all Christian confessions and churches today. Traces of what we have called the perished "pre- and extra-christian" Jesus movement in that area can be found not only in some literary witnesses but still alive among the Mandaean and in the Islamic religion. Islam, the predominant religion in today's Syria, has conserved individual parts of this tradition."

Some call Salzburg the Festival City. Another suitable description will be the beautiful city of monks and nuns. The music-lovers would describe it as the city of Mozart. Historically speaking the young Mozart did not receive or find much encouragement in Salzburg. While he was in Vienna in 1781 he wrote a letter to his father which speaks for itself.

"Indeed in Salzburg I had problems working and could almost not decide why. Because my soul was not happy, you must admit that in Salzburg—at least for me—there is no real entertainment. Nothing urges my talent on! When I play or a composition of mine is performed it seems as if my audience is only made up of tables and chairs."

But the situation changed for the better. He wrote to his sister Nannerl from Salzburg in 1784.

“The Entfuehrung aus dem Serail” was performed rather well on the 17th to great applause and three parts were encored...the whole city liked it, even the archbishop was kind enough to say he thought it really was quite good.”

We did not get much time for sight seeing. In the short time at our disposal on the second day Prof. Hofrichter took us to show the fortress. Although there is access to the fortress on foot we went by Funicular. It looks like a small hill train. In seconds we reached the fortress. We had to wait for some more passengers. It is not economical to operate it for a few passengers.

In 1077 A. D., as a result of the power struggle between the Pope and the emperor, attack and defence were common. In the 15th century the prince archbishop Leonard made a fortress out of the castle during 1495-1519. During the peasants revolt in 1525 this fortress, along with Cardinal Prince Archbishop Matthew, was unsuccessfully besieged. In the 17th century the fortifications were last improved. Now it is a tourists attraction.

Bishop Bawai Soro noticed that the big cannons were facing the people of the town and not the enemies coming out from the town. It means that his enemies were his own people living inside the city. When the rulers failed to serve their own citizens, they had to resort to revolt against their own rulers. Have the Churches alienated their own people? It must be the reason why many people, young and old, desert the established Churches all over the world.

A visit to Salzburg will be incomplete without a visit to the Hellbrunn Palace. It was probably built by the Cathedral's architect Santino Solari during 1613-15. The ingenious water amusements in the gardens and the several grottos made Hellbrunn unique. It is well preserved.

Every visitor would agree that the fortress Hohensalzburg, the Hellbrunn, the Cathedral, Mozart's birth house and many beautiful and historic sites make Salzburg enjoyable as a historic and unique place among the cities in Europe.

There is one more historic importance for Salzburg. The place where the famous Silent Night Holy Night..... (*Stille Nacht Heilige Nacht*) was composed is only a few kilometers from Salzburg. I knew it only when I was returning from Salzburg. It was in 1818 in Obendorf Fr. Josef Mohr and a teacher Franz Xaver Gruber composed this famous carol in a hurry for their festive mass on X'mas with a simple guitar when they discovered that the bellows of the Church organ had been badly damaged.

The first Cathedral of Salzburg was consecrated in 774 A. D., by Bishop Vergil who hailed from Dublin. At that time this was probably the biggest Christian Church in Central Europe. During the time of his successor Arno, the Pope elevated Salzburg to an arch-diocese. It was the wish of the Emperor, Charles the Great. Soon the city became a prominent trading centre, especially for skins, furs, salts and also slaves from South East Europe.

In the 11th & 12th centuries Salzburg became the centre of quarrel between the Pope and the emperor concerning the appointment of bishops. It is known in history as Investiture controversy. As a result of this quarrel, Emperor Friedric Barbarosa ordered the burning of Salzburg.

After the rule of Archbishop Eberard II (1200-1246) the longest ruling archbishop, things began to be brighter for Salzburg. It was in the Middle Ages, Salzburg became an important city in the world. The wealth of Salzburg depended on salt, gold mining in the northern Tauern and also export of woven products.

Between the 15th and 17th centuries a lot of beautiful buildings were constructed. About 1,500 A. D. Leonard von Kentschach extended the fortress Hohensalzburg to its present form. The Burghers' houses in the old city dated back to this period. Towards the end of the 16th century archbishop Wolf Dietrich pulled down 60 burghers' houses. He tried to convert Salzburg into a "German Rome." He was the architect of the layout of the Cathedral, the old city and the Mirabell Palace, although much of it was completed decades later.

The Baroque period begins around 1700 A. D. The famous architect Johann Benhard Fischer von Erlach made his contribution to design Kollegien, Dreifaltigkeitskirche etc.

In the 18th century enlightened prince-archbishops ruled Salzburg and they made it a city of sciences and arts. It was in the second half of this century Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart lived. He was born on 27 January, 1756

in the house in Getreidgasse 9. About Mozart a guide book comments;

It already became apparent during his childhood that Salzburg had produced one of the greatest musical geniuses of all time. In this way, the peak of a centuries-old musical tradition that ranged from the minstrels of the Middle Ages over Paul Hofhaymer to Michael Haydn, the brother of Joseph was reached in Salzburg.

Pointing to a Protestant Church Prof. Hoffrichter remarked. "It is the only Protestant church in Salzburg." One may wonder why there are less Protestants in Austria while the Protestants are slightly more than the Catholics across the border in Germany. History gives us the explanation. There were many Protestants in Salzburg too. But in 1732 the ruthless Leopold Firmain expelled more than twenty thousand Protestants.

In 1800 Napoleonic troops invaded Salzburg. In 1816 Salzburg became a part of Austria. In 1860 Emperor Franz Joseph opened a station in Salzburg. Thus came excellent connections between Vienna and Munich. The trains run every hour i. e., forty minutes after every hour from Vienna, and five minutes after every hour in return, i. e., Salzburg to Vienna. Salzburg is closer to Munich than to Vienna.

About the progress of this city in the present century the Guide to Salzburg quoted earlier has the following to say. p. 4

This continued to improve for Salzburg in the 20th C. Since 1920 masterpieces of the

western theatre and music scene are performed annually at the Festival in front of International audiences. However, it is not only the Festival, but also the cultural and scenic treasures that make Salzburg one of the most popular places in Europe. Tourism has brought wealth to the almost 150,000 inhabitants, just as its favourable position on major cross-roads underlines its role as an important trading centre.

The Bavarian beer gardens are as famous as the Viennese coffee houses. As I do not drink beer, I did not go to any beer gardens. There are three famous cafes in Salzburg.

1. "Tomaselli" at the old market
2. "Mozart" at Getreidgasse
3. "Bazar" on the right bank of the River Saizach.

The speciality of the city is "Salzburger Nockerlu", a sweet, light, fluffy egg dish, one portion of each will be sufficient for three. Salzburger Mozartkugelu is a speciality in this city. It is chocolate on the outside filled with merzipan which will melt in the mouth—Mozart-Tale is another variation Bachcube, dedicated to Bach, is not sold as much as Mozart products. Mozart is the favourite son of Salzburg.

The next day I left Salzburg by train to Vienna. Mr. Ludwig Niestelburger, my host in my first trip to Vienna in 1990, received me at Vienna West Railway station and I spent one day at his home. The next day he took me by train to the Airport.

From Rennweg station (underground railway) we came to Vienna Middle station. From there we changed to Flughafen schwaget station. We climbed the escalators and reached the departure area. There were sign boards showing airplanes taking off. That area meant departure. The other signs of planes descending meant arrivals. Those who do not know the German translations for the words arrivals and departures would look at the sign boards and decide which way to turn.

To some extent sign language is a solution to the language problem. One does not have to learn the translations. Look at the signs. If you find a cigarette with an X on it, it is clear that it is a no-smoking zone. If there is a sign of cup, fork, knife etc., I understand that there is a restaurant car in that train.

Mr. Ludwig Niestelberger accompanied me to the airport. It was a help to carry one bag. In June 1990 it was somewhat difficult to carry two baggages and one hand bag. It is difficult to manage baggage etc alone. This time I had only one hand bag and one small suitcase. Most of the books I had carried I had presented to friends. I was happy to get rid of them, because I did not have to carry back a packet of books. One has only two hands; better have only two bags and no more. To get in and out of the train is not easy with heavy baggages. Travel light is a very practical advice which everybody should take seriously. It is helpful to us as well as to fellow-passengers.

The Indian friend who was travelling with me to Vienna had 63 Kg of luggage instead of the 20 kg permitted. When he was asked to pay for the extra

baggage at Bombay he gave a bribe of Rs. 100 to the workers who closed their eyes and let the baggage roll over the conveyor belt. He was afraid they would charge him at Rome as his baggage were transferred from Alitalia to Austrian airlines. To his great comfort they did not weigh the baggage again. Their duty was simply to transfer the baggage

Contrary to my practice I reached the airport before the counter was open. So I sat and wrote these words. It is always better to arrive at airports early. We can check-in at leisure. This is the principle I preach, but do not practise.

CHAPTER 3

London & Around

My ninth visit to England in June 1995 was not anticipated. After my plan to go to California was finalised, I had a telephone call from my friend Dr. Andrew Palmer, a Syriac scholar, who teaches at the School of Oriental and African Studies (S. O. A. S.) in London, enquiring whether I would be interested to participate in the Eastern Festival on 13th June 1995. "Where is it?" I queried. He replied, "Here, in London." It sounded like some town near home in Kerala. Then suddenly I realised that London was not next door.

Dr. Palmer wanted to know whether I would be available on that day for the Eastern Festival. Then I told him that I would be happy to participate especially because it wouldn't cost them much for my travel. I had just to ask for a "break Journey" on my flight to California, U. S. A. I would need a visa for my visit to England even for a single day. In 1961 when I went to England I did not need a visa, being a citizen of the British Commonwealth. Now India's membership in the great Commonwealth does not add any special advantage to Indian tourists. We are as aliens, as the people of Iran or Syria.

On 12 June 1995 I reached London's Heathrow airport. One of the air hostesses in my flight came to

carry my baggage. My travel Agents, PL Worldways, Cochin, had sent a message to the Kuwait Airways, to give special attention to me as they would give to V. I. P.s or invalids.

Some of my Assyrian friends, Eshaya Chemmani, Dinkha Isaac, Narsi Narsi, Adam Paulos Adam, and Deacon Skaria were at the airport. My sister Susheela and her husband Dr. N V. George and children (Honey, Dr. Sheena, Varkey and Tresa) were also at the airport. They took me to their home in High Wycombe as their main house in Rugby was 3 hours away by car.

My sister and family had baked a diabetic birth day cake for me that night. I was born on 13th June 1940. Thus I completed 55 years of age. In Kerala State it is retirement age for state government employees, professors, police etc. (except senior officers in the all India cadre of I. A. S., I. P. S. who work upto 58 years). Even judges at the District Courts retire at age 55. Some of the retired Judges continue active lives.

On 13th June Varkey and Tresa took care of me, after others had gone to Rugby and other places. In 1966 I had given house baptism to them and to Maya, Tresa's twin sister in that house at High Wycombe. My mind went back to that event nearly 29 years ago. Nostalgic memories of that day flooded my mind when they were young. Later that day they took me to S. O. A. S., to pick up the *sitar*, the North Indian instrument which I was to play during the Eastern Festival that evening.

At the London School of Music my beard must have frightened the porter there. It seemed to us that he

didn't like our presence there. Seeing his unfriendly attitude we talked to the secretary in the office. She telephoned her boss and found out that we were expected and genuine and he had given his permission for me to use his sitar. She took us downstairs and allowed us to pick up the *sitar*, although she didn't know how a *sitar* looked like.

The unfriendly old man hurried there and asked how we got in that room without his knowledge. She said that she had access to the room. "How did *they* get in?" he demanded to know. She said that we came together to the room. Frustrated he stopped further questioning. We got out of the room as quickly as possible before our unfriendly friend locked us in.

Armed with big sitar we walked into the S. O. A. S. office. We were not sure how friendly would be the welcome at the reception desk. We reported that we were looking for Dr. Andrew Palmer whom we knew would not be in his office before 2.00 p. m. But what would we do until 2.00 p. m. carrying the big *sitar*?

Joachim Persoon was waiting for us fortunately. He took us to Dr. Palmer's office. Joachim Persoon worked with Dr. Palmer in arranging this Eastern Festival. He is an artist who paints icons in Oriental Christian styles. Previously he had studied in Jerusalem and Cairo. At S. O. A. S. He is doing a post graduate degree on Ethiopian monasticism.

In Dr. Palmer's room I practised my devotional song in Malayalam as well as two classical *ragas* in Karnatic (South Indian) music known as *Mohanam* and

Sankarabaranam. I was happy that the instrument was in good shape and in tune. It did not take much time to get used to a different *sitar* than the one I am used to in Trichur. Joachim showed me the exhibition before Dr. Palmer arrived

On this trip, I was not well when I left India on Sunday June 11. After the service at Marth Mariyam Big Church on the festival of Pentecost, I rushed to Coimbatore by car, to catch the flight to Bombay. During the week I also blessed a clinic of my Church member Dr. Inasu Chakola who had returned to India giving up his lucrative Medical practice in Muscat. A few days prior to the journey I developed pain in both ears which was very uncomfortable. But the flight itself did not aggravate the pain.

The announcement of the event was on the notice board. On bold letters it was written

KERALA EVENING, WITH NARRATIVE DANCE BY
NUNS,
RE-ENACTMENT OF THE BOAT-RACE,
COLOURFUL PROCESSION
WITH UMBRELLAS, NESTORIAN EPISCOPAL
SITAR-PLAYING AND SYRIAC AND
MALAYALAM SPIRITUAL SONGS.

The function was at the Assembly Hall of the Department of the Study of Religions, at S. O. A. S. Not only Indians, but also Assyrians came to the function. Some English people were also there. My friend Dr. Sebastian Brock, to whose students at the Oriental Institute, Oxford I had given a talk in May, 1994, came from Oxford to attend the function.

The Catholic nuns from Kerala (Sr. Asha, Sr. Ruth, Sr. Tresa, Sr. Lilly and Sr. Molly) did a very good dance performance. The yoga dance and the dance in Biblical theme impressed me. I have known that the nuns are good at making others dance, but they never do it themselves. In Catholic schools the nuns train their pupils to perform well in inter-school competition and win prizes. But if they themselves dance, it will be a hot news for all newspapers, as this artistic expression is beyond social expectations. But our nuns in Kerala are able to express their artistic talents when they are abroad. I must congratulate Dr. Andrew Palmer who is a pious Catholic layman for persuading the nuns to dance, not to his tune, though,

But these participating nuns came from the St Benedicts in Brighton, East Sussex, England. The Grace and Compassion Benedictines have branches all over the world. In India they have convents in Tiruvannamalai in Tamilnadu, at Kumbalagod near Bangalore, and at Makkiyad in Wynad District, in Kerala.

“I am from Pattikad”, said Sr. Asha. I was delighted to hear that because Pattikad is only 15 minutes from Trichur town and the oldest Church in that village belongs to the church of the East under my jurisdiction. My vanity vanished when she said that she had never heard my name. Having been a Metropolitan for nearly 27 years I was under the wrong impression that most people, at least Christians of all denominations in Trichur District, at least had heard of me. I was happy to know that I was wrong.

Mother Mary Garson O. S. B. is the foundress and Prioress General of the Benedictine Sisters of our Lady

of Grace and Compassion founded in Brighton, East Sussex, near London. In addition to their work in England, they have branches in India, Sri Lanka, and East Africa. It is nice to know that Indians send missionaries to England in return for the British missionaries who used to come to India since last century. It used to be a one-way missionary activity once; it is now a two-way activity.

Mother Mary Garson was in Kerala last year visiting her work at Makkiyad in Waynad. She described the little mountain near their convent in Kerala as "utterly beautiful." Mother Mary was reminded of the favourite Psalm of her mother, "I to the hills will lift my heart ...". Mother Mary Garson is still active like Mother Theresa of Calcutta, the foundress of the Sisters of Charity, who is not allowed to retire from active duty even at 85. Some would retire at 55 and others at 65 or 75. But to Mother Theresa and some talented persons 85 is not old age, however fragile they may appear to be.

Mr. Brownrigg had been to the Metropolitan's Palace in Trichur some years ago to see me. Prof. John Ochanthuruth of the Department of History in the University of Calicut had brought him here. Mr. Brownrigg is a business man interested in architecture. When he heard that I was going to London he telephoned me at Trichur and offered to take me around. He was at the airport to receive me. The next day he came to attend my *sitar* performance at the S. O. A. S. I could not find time to accept his hospitality.

The brain behind the Eastern Festival in London is Dr. Andrew Palmer. He gave the following reasons for arranging such a function:

“The idea came up because of two things which happened in my life. One was going to Kerala, in India, last September. There I saw nuns dancing a story from the Gospel of Saint John, about how the risen Lord told his disciples to ‘cast out the net on the other side’, then met them on the shore for a mystic woodfire breakfast of miraculous fish. I also heard a music group, trained to play Indian classical ragas, accompanying in the same style a singing priest who is also a poet and a translator of the ancient Syriac poets of Mesopotamia, in the Middle East, with whom the Keralans have an ancient connection. And I attended a service in the Syriac language, sung to a haunting chant and made mysterious and solemn by the accompaniment of three instruments: the violin, the drum and the triangle. (The old man who played the triangle dropped it three times in the course of the service!)

The other thing that happened was that I began to teach a course on the indigenous Christianity of the Middle East and India, from Ethiopia to Malabar (and on, towards China) and became even more interested in the vitality and creativity of churches which many western people, if they know of their existence, imagine to be mere vestiges of a once-great Christian world swamped by Islam. I also began to work with a young researcher, who is also an artist and a convert to Coptic Orthodoxy (Egyptian Christianity). This made me feel good. I was not the only person in the western world to find oriental

Christianity not only interesting to study, but fresh inspiration to me, as an artist, and a source of wisdom.

We are all artists. God is an artist and he made both men and women in his image (Genesis 1:27). Obviously the resemblance is not physical, or only one sex could be made in God's image. What it means is that we are all made to be artists, like God. So let us get together and make music, dance, sing, play the cymbals (or the triangle), paint pictures, weave words together into mystic poetry or simple praise and show God and our fellow-people that we are glad to be made in the image of the great Artist, glad we are alive, glad that being artists abolishes the painful differences between men and women, between East and West. We are the Easter people, and since the first Easter happened in the East, let us celebrate the remembrance of it in an Eastern way!"

55th birthday

Since on June 13th I was turning 55 years, there was a birthday card signed by the Catholic nuns and Mrs. Molly Bowen, the English lady leading the Indian nuns to this programme. Then there was a birthday cake by the Indian Orthodox Syrian Congregation in London. Last year when I preached in their congregation (The Church belongs to Anglicans) for Pentecost day (May 22) I never thought that I would see them so soon again. Since then their priest had been transferred and a new vicar, Fr. Skariah, appointed by their Metropolitan Dr. Thomas Mar Makarios. Mar Makarios lives in the

U. S. A. and takes care of his flock scattered in Canada, England and Europe.

The singing of Malayalam songs by the Choir of the Indian Orthodox congregation in London was excellent. Their solemn procession with silken umbrellas, golden cross, candles etc. was impressive. Dr. Joe Philips, my Indian Orthodox friend living in Preston was at the function. Another Orthodox priest whom I had met at Mavelikara, Kerala recently was also there.

Rev. Aby T. Mammen, Vicar of the Mar Thoma Church in whose service I had preached on the eve of the Pentecost Day in 1994, was also present. He invited me to stay with him for a few days. But like the previous year this year too I could not find a few hours even to visit him. This young Mar Thoma priest is taking advantage of his sojourn in England to study theology for a Master's degree at Oxford. I must admit that the Mar Thoma Syrian Church in India has many educated clergy.

Fr. Skariah had also invited me to stay with him. It is a joy to know that inspite of the denominational differences, most of the clergy feel at home with each other. My problem was that I was trying to include many places in my itinerary during my trips abroad. Instead of 3 days each in seven places, I could have planned 7 days each in 3 places. When some people telephone and ask, "Can't you include also a visit to us just for one day?" I often had to give a disappointing answer.

There was rapt attention when I played *Sitar*. It is not for me to judge whether they were silent out of their respect for my office or because they were thrilled by my

“exciting” performance or because silence would help them to detect my defects, minor and major. I played both devotional and classical tunes. Although tempted to sing, I abstained from doing so in order not to spoil my music. If at all I succeed in the field of music, it looks that it will be in playing an instrument (whether sitar or the keyboard) rather than in the vocal field. The musical instruments can be easily manipulated than my unmusical vocal chords.

While in England, Uzziar Khazal, my Sufi friend, who met me in 1994 came to see me along with his English friend who is interested in publishing books. As they were thinking of a visit to India, I wrote to them that I would be at a function of S. O. A. S., London University on 13 June 1995. They got my letter just in time; so I got a chance to see them there.

William Dalrymple who wrote about me in *The Independent Magazine* dated April 1994 came to see me. I had mentioned about him in my travelogue of 1994 entitled *OXFORD TO AUSTRIA* (P. 17). His friend Ian Berry's expert hands had cliqued many photos in Trichur during the Easter of 1993. It was nice to meet William Dalrymple again. I giggled when I told him that I had read his remark in the *Independent Magazine* about me that I am “a small, rotund person with a child-like giggle.” He justified his remark by saying that I looked like “a small, rotund person” when he interviewed me in the Metropolitan's Palace, Trichur in 1993. I did not dare to ask him whether I appeared the same after two years.

A reporter of B. B. C. was with him. He wants to visit Kerala including Trichur in Feb. 1996 to produce a

documentary on the Churches of St. Thomas. The Church at Palayur, one of the seven Churches believed to have been built by St. Thomas, is near in Trichur. It is believed that a temple was there before this Church was built. I pray God that this fact or tradition would not create tension between Christians and Hindus. The biggest headache of the Indian government today is to fulfil their promise to re-build the Babri Masjid in Ayodhya in North India which was demolished by Hindus in December 1992.

The justification for such a demolition is that it was originally a temple site when Baber, father of the great Muslim emperor Akbar, destroyed the temple and built the mosque on site in the 16th century. This can be a disturbing issue and raises many perplexing questions. There is no end to the debate on what is the cut off date? Should we all go back to the 5th century to settle the issue? In that case there would not be any mosque, as Prophet Mohammed was born only in 570 A. D.

Do we all get back to 1st century B. C. when there were no Christian Churches? Even in the beginning of the 4th century there were no established Christian Churches in the Roman empire. It was emperor Constantine who gave permission to build Churches.

Why do we need temples if we do not have worshippers to worship there? If most of the Christians in one village have become Hindus and they destroy their Church and build a Hindu temple, should we insist that the Christian Church should be re-built there? Sometimes

our fanaticism fades our great tradition of tolerance and replaces reason and mutual respects.

After the Indian Christian evening, I went to Oxford to spend night in the home of Dr. Andrew Palmer. He has a large family of five fine children. I said large family, without thinking that I am one of the ten children, seven sons and three daughters like Job in the Old Testament. Family size is changing rapidly and in the present generation I do not find large families of ten children as in the past.

Dr Palmer's wife holds a Ph. D. degree and works at Oxford University. She has a helper at home to send the children in time to the school. I sometimes wonder how much pains the parents take to raise children. Being a celibate clergy, I cannot fathom the troubles involved in raising children.

Next morning before leaving Dr. Palmer's house I talked to E. Kornhardt the bookseller at 42 Hill View Road, Oxford. This was to confirm that the Mar Narsai Press had sent her 5 copies of my book *Teach Yourself Aramaic* which she had ordered.

On 14 June at noon Fr. Robert Murray S. J. joined us for lunch. Dr. Palmer had invited Fr. Murray, a senior Syriac scholar whom I had met at the Syriac Symposium in Goslar, Germany in 1980. His 70th birth day was close to my 55th and Dr. Palmer celebrated it with a lunch.

Eshaya Chemmani had invited Dr. Palmer and me for dinner in his home in Ealing where I also spent the night. For several years it has been "my home" in London during

my short visits. We had some Assyrians visiting us that night. The next day some of them came to see me off at the Heathrow airport. The Kuwait Airways flight to New York was however delayed. I sent my Assyrian friends "off" and spent some time reading and writing. It was better than returning to Ealing and coming back to Heathrow in the heavy traffic of London.

As I left London after a three-day busy programme, I was grateful to Dr. Andrew Palmer as well as to the Fellowship of St. Alban and St. Sergius in Oxford which sponsored this Eastern Festival. According to the publicity material it was a festival of "Image, Word and Music in a Christian Tradition."

It began on 2 May and was to end on 29th June. The programme was divided into many Oriental Christian evenings. My programme on 13th June was the Indian Syrian Christian evening. Other parts of the programme were the Syriac evening (10th May), Christian Arabic poetry evening (18th May), Armenian evening (22nd May), Indian evening (1st June), Coptic evening (6th June) and Ethiopian evening (22nd June).

I do not know which was the best evening or the well attended evening. I believe that Andrew Palmer and his Coptic colleague Joachim Persoon should be congratulated in their new concept and making Oriental Orthodox Churches better known to some in the academic community and others in London. I noticed the S. O. A. S. is gaining new heights in the new edifice being built.

Chapter 4

California

On 15 June I flew to New York. As my flight was delayed many insisted for night stay in the city. In my case Kuwait Airways had already reserved hotel accommodation for me in JFK Hilton. My travel Agent had known that it would be difficult to make domestic connection from La Guardia at New York since the International Arrival was at JF Kennedy international airport.

The main purpose of my visit was doing Qurbana at the St. Mary's Church, Hughson near Modesto (3 hours distance by car from San Francisco) San Jose international airport is also somewhat the same distance in a different direction. In 1992 I had flown from San Jose to Chicago. But we were caught in the traffic jam and I missed the flight. Therefore I was not sure whether I should fly to San Francisco or San Jose. In either case there would be traffic jam. Of course there is an airport at Modesto. But I should not waste one more coupon on my VUSA (Visit U.S.A.) ticket of the American Airlines for such short distances, as each extra coupon would cost about 116 dollars. Any change on date or place would cost an additional \$50, as service charge.

Archdeacon Eshai Joseph, priest in charge of the St. Mary's Church was at the San Francisco airport. We

drove straight to St. Mary's Church at 7th street Fox Ave., in Hughson. I remembered how much difficulty we had when my brother Joe Mookan and family drove me to Hughson from San Diego in 1988. We couldn't find the place when we got out of the car and my niece Miriam frantically asked for direction to Hughson. One man informed us that Houston was in Texas, which of course is a different city.

Bishop Ammanuel was waiting for me at the Church along with Fr. Bachus to begin the *Ramsha* (evening) prayer. I was meeting Bishop Ammanuel for the first time. He is a young bishop consecrated in 1993 in Bagdad, Iraq to be assistant at the Patriarchate. Now he is studying at the San Francisco University, run by the Jesuits. I guess that he is slowly overcoming his language problem. But to study theology without proficiency in English is not easy. Moreover since he is at a Roman Catholic University his lack of knowledge of Latin could lead to more delays in obtaining a degree in theology.

Next day I celebrated Holy Qurbana at the St. Mary's Church where I had also celebrated in 1988, 1992 and 1993. Before this Church building was purchased I had assisted Patriarch Mar Adhai in celebrating Qurbana in an Anglican Church in Turlock area in 1984. At that time the local Anglican bishop had attended the service.

What I do not forget of my 1984 visit was that I was privileged to sleep on a water bed. I was afraid that I would be drowned if the bed burst while I turned my 82-Kg weight (now it is only 73 Kg) without care during my sleep. I knew that I was sleeping on 'handle with

care" bed. The owner Mike Purto assured me that he had been sleeping on that water bed for a long time and it never created any problem for him with his heavy weight on it.

I was happy that an Indian family attended the service. Joy Mulakkan and his wife Saje along with their son Nikhil and daughter Nisha arrived before service began at 9 a. m. Joy is a Manager of Sun Microsystems, a computer company in Sillicon Valley. He had been an engineer with Keltron in Kerala. His invention "Mulakkan Rotary Engine" was patented in America (No. 4966102) in 1990. I had quoted in my travelogue *Los Angeles To Tokyo* a news item about his rotory engine which appeared in *India West* dated Dec. 14, 1990.

"Mulakkan Rotary Engine" will save fuel at least by 4 times. It is 16 times more powerful than simliar piston engines. He claims that his invention is a simple machine. It is cheaper to manufacture and requires no expensive tooling. Yet his invention is still on his table where I saw in 1993. It requires at least 150,000 dollars to make a prototype which is 4.6 million rupees. It is not easy for an Indian to get that kind of money.

After Qurbana we had brunch (breakfast and lunch combined) in the Modesto city park. At that time I introduced Joy Mulakkan to Mr. Youel Isaac Chemmani, youngest brother of Eshaya Chemmani of London. Youvel remembered when I had visited his father Rev. Isaac Enwiya in Bagdad in 1962. We both were younger then which was 33 years ago. I tried to explain to Youvel about the patent of this machine as he has many business contacts.

It is my fervent hope that someone who reads this book in the U. S. Congress Library, Washington D. C., may be interested in utilising the discovery of this Indian Engineer. If I were like Chandraswami, the bearded Indian godman who is a friend of Elizabeth Taylor and the Sultan of Brunei, the richest person in the world, I could have mentioned it to them who may buy this patent and use his talents.

In the afternoon we had the inauguration of Mar Aprem Library. It was followed by Seminar II a program of the Mesopotamia Light at the St. Ephrem Education Center at 6825 third street. Riverbank, California. This city is not too far from Modesto.

Lincoln E. Isaac was the Moderator. He had performed this duty in the first Seminar held in May 15-17, 1992 at Cheateau de Ville at 1773 Prestcost Road, Modesto. As soon as I reached St. Ephrem Education Center I greeted Lincoln Isaac. Archdeacon Eshai Joseph asked, "Do you know Lincoln?" Since I am 17 years younger than the Rev. Eshai Joseph, I could remember the man I had met 3 years earlier.

Professor Hamilton Hess, a former Anglican from England, now a devout Catholic settled in California, was the speaker. He was also a speaker at the Seminar and it was nice to meet him again. Prof. Hess spoke on the topic, "St Ephrem, Deacon and Doctor of the Church."

It was my privilege to talk about Syriac studies and books in India. I had to tell some humorous stories as I could not hide my identity. Some people had heard about my joke books and they wanted to obtain some.

Unfortunately I do not carry these books with me at the time, and the bookstores in U. S. A. do not stock them.

Fr. Oshana Kanon led the choir for singing Assyrian songs. This time we missed the colourful Assyrian dance, the entertainment part of the Seminar of 1992, yet it was a well attended event. Even after coffee and snacks people did not leave and returned to the meeting.

Dr. Davy Emmatty from Trichur, attended the seminar. He is an expert on tomatoes and is in charge of the research wing of the Heinz Ketchup Company. Davy was transferred from Ohio to California by the Company about three years ago. In 1991 I was in his home in Bowling Green, Ohio. In 1991 I had a chance to visit him at his home in Stockton. After the Seminar, he took me to his home, which was 45 minutes drive by car.

It was good to spend one day in Davy's home. I had a few hours to talk about physical exercises to reduce weight, etc. Davy's wife Gracy is a gracious hostess. When Davy came to see me in New York in 1966 he was single. At that time he was doing Ph. D at Purdue University. Since then a lot of changes had taken place. Both his son Anil and daughter Liza have grown up. Davy is an year younger to me. During his hectic schedule as he was getting ready to go to Portugal we both got a few hours of rest and relaxation while eating Indian cuisine.

From Sacramento I flew to San Diego. The Southwest Airline claims to be the low fare Airline. The cost of \$89 to San Diego was perhaps the lowest. It does not claim to be the *lowest fare*. There may be lower

fare and the lowest fare. By the way I forget whether I flew from Sacramento, or Oakland, as both are nearer to Stockton where the Emmattys reside.

There is no ticket. They claim to be the only ticket-less airline. When we went to the airport they gave a plastic token instead of a ticket. By that device, they save the printing charge. If I had a ticket I would have verified from where I emplaned at 4 p. m. on Monday June 19th. My memory is good for dates. But I am not sure whether the airport was Sacramento or Oakland. It is called a "peanut" flight, referring to the lack of refreshments served on the flight except a packet of peanuts and a soft drink.

San Diego

It was the first time I was arriving at the San Diego airport. In my previous trips to San Diego (1988, 1991 and 93) I flew to Los Angeles and went to San Diego by car. But I flew this time to San Diego to avoid a long drive from the Los Angeles airport. I was somewhat familiar with the airport. In 1993 I had departed from that airport. At that time my niece Mia and her husband Tony had seen me off.

My eldest brother Jose Mookan had shifted his residence. It was nice to spend three days with him and his wife Lalu and daughter Michalle (Miki) in San Diego. I could also bless the new house my niece Mia and her husband Tony had bought.

Dr K. I. Verghese and Omana, Dr. K. M. Mathen and his wife Molly, Ashok, the family of John Zachariah

and other friends were there in my brother's place. These Kerala friends wanted me to stay longer and visit their homes. Unfortunately I could not because of my tight schedule. Also my responsibilities in India do not let me enjoy the luxury of a comfortable and relaxed stay abroad. As I had seen the Sea World and such other tourist places in 1977 I did not waste my time for sight seeing. Nevertheless, my brother took me to the beach and let me wet my feet in the ocean.

Howard Wells was another friend I wished to visit in this trip. I had visited him earlier in 1977. I wanted to visit him in 1988. But when I telephoned him I could hear only his recorded voice. In 1991 and in 1993 I did visit him. This time when I telephoned him I could hear a lady's recorded voice asking me to leave the message, if any. I was very disappointed to miss him. My fear was that he might be sick. I wished that I knew his whereabouts so that I could visit him.

A small machine to test glucose level in blood known as Accu-Chek Advantage is a useful device for most of the diabetic patients. Since it would cost more than 180 U. S. dollars in India I thought it might be very expensive in the U. S. A. also and hence I did not show any interest in it. When my brother offered to buy one for me, I accepted it with some reservation. I was very relieved when I realised that its cost was about one third of its Indian price. My brother bought this device for dollar 55. But the strip used to check the glucose level is expensive. A container of 50 strips cost dollar 30. One reason for choosing the product is that it is manufactured by Boehringer Mannheim company which sells such products in India. As there are competing products we

went to two or three stores to make a choice. Finally when we were buying I noticed one with a price dollar 49.95. Since it was less than the other one with higher a price tag of dollar 55, I preferred to buy the cheapest. But now we realised that dollar 49.95 device did not have any test strips, while the more costlier one has ten strips. It didn't take much time for us to realise that the higher priced device because of the inclusion of the strips is cheaper. Thus we purchased the dollar 55 device with its ten test strips.

My niece Miki works full time now at the place where she had been working part time before her graduation. I visited her company where they make some equipments for use in the area of biology. My training in theology did not equip me with the necessary knowledge to understand the use of these equipments.

CHAPTER 5

Texas To Toronto

Texas is one of the few states in the U S. A. which I had not visited before. It is indeed a large state. Dallas and Houston are prominent cities in the state of Texas. I was headed this time to Dallas which is also the city where John F. Kennedy was assassinated.

Maya my niece who got married in Rugby, U. K. on May 14, 1994 is now living in Dallas with her husband George. Her father-in-law, Dr. C. V Jacob Chempitra, works in a large hospital in Dallas. They live in Plano, a suburb of Dallas.

As part of my sight seeing, Mrs. Rajamma Jacob drove me to the J. R. Ranch, publicized all over America by a TV show known as Dallas. This TV show was produced in this Ranch. J. R. Duncan had built south fork Ranch in 1970. In 1984 an 160 acre ranch was added. After the TV show was produced the Mansion and the 41 acres of the ranch was sold at the public auction.

Frito-Lay factory which makes potato chips is a huge enterprise. We went there and enquired whether it had any attractions to a tourist. One man replied in the negative as it was just a factory where the workers deal with potatoes.

J. C. Penney's buildings are so imposing with its beautiful view in that Dallas suburb. To a visitor, this complex looked like Red Fort in New Delhi. It is the administrative building of J. C. Penney, which consists of many department stores specialising in household goods such as clothes and furniture. I have not visited any other business which has such a huge office for administration, although I know that big businesses in the U. S. have large, attractive headquarters.

Electronic Data Systems (E. D. S.) is another large enterprise with a huge building in the neighbourhood. E. D. S. is a company which makes micro chips etc. We drove also around the Texas A & M University. We avoided the busy part of the city on that Friday forenoon.

Friday 23rd June 1995 was the birthday of Maya. Her twin sister Tresa telephoned her to wish happy birthday. They talked for a very long time. We cannot blame them. They were together for twenty nine years of their lives until Maya got married. It is difficult to separate twins for they have so much in common. It seems that telephone companies benefit if twins are separated especially by an ocean. It may be better to marry them to men in the same country or even better in the same city.

George, Maya's husband, took me to see downtown Dallas. We went to the tallest building, the Reunion Tower. We went up into the revolving restaurant atop the Reunion Tower. There we ate the delicious Nachs, the Maxican food. It is a tasty preparation with cheese and sour cream and Jalepino pepper. Since I am diabetic, George ordered a food fit for my health. He ordered

meat in a separate dish for him as he knew that I abstained from meat ever since I became a bishop in 1968.

As the revolving restaurant kept moving I could see the city of Dallas. "That was the place President Kennedy was shot. We will drive through that location when we go down" said George. From the top of the Dome we had a good view of the city. The middle level of the Reunion Tower is called Antares, named after the brightest star in the Scorpio constellation. The lowest level of the Dome is known as *The Lookout*. The skyline of Fort Worth was visible to the West.

The Geodesic Dome was made of gleaming aluminum struts, each 15 ft. long. This was assembled by workmen atop the Tower at 560 feet off the ground. This dome contains more than 1,00,000 separate parts, and it is 111 feet in diameter.

The Reunion Tower was opened on April 15th 1978 two years after the construction had commenced. This masterpiece of engineering weighs 23,600 tons. The view elevator carried us to the top, in 68 seconds. There is a stairway to the top, if one wants to climb 837 steps. The dome which is lighted every evening is the symbol of Dallas.

The dome has 260 lights. The 14 miles of wiring required for the lighting system is concealed within the aluminum struts. When light replacement is necessary it is done manually.

To save energy and to prolong the life of the bulbs, the lower lights are dimmed. Reunion

Tower has 50 stories and is indeed the attraction of Dallas downtown. The Hyatt Regency Hotel next door is a large complex and has 1,000 rooms.

On Saturday morning Dr. Jacob Chempitra, father of George, took me to see the major tourist attraction in downtown Dallas. It is the place of the assassination of President Kennedy. It is near the Hyatt Regency Hotel where we had gone the previous day.

The admission to the building costs \$4 per person. We were shown pictures and a video about the assassination of John Kennedy. We rushed through this building in ten minutes. Some tourists slowly moved around seeing and learning about the historic tragedy of shooting President John Kennedy in Dallas in November 1963.

From there we went to the house of Jaison T. Waghorne. But there was nobody home and we left a message for him. When we came back we got a telephone call from Jaison. Then he came over to the house of Dr. Jacob in Plano where I was staying.

J. T. Waghorne is a young attorney. He is interested in religion, especially in the Church of the East. He had bought a set of Hudra, the prayer book in Aramaic (Syriac) and expressed a great desire to know more about our Church. Further he wanted to get an audio tape of Holy Qurbana chanted in English. Although I promised to do it I was not sure when I would get time to fulfil that promise.

Mrs. Shanta Lazar is a member of our Church in Koratty, Kerala. She had gone to Dallas a few months ago

with her two children, sponsored by her sister. When I left India her husband in Kerala gave me her telephone number in Dallas. I talked to her on the phone, but regretted that I did not have time to visit her, as I was flying to Toronto the same afternoon.

Nadam was a newspaper printed in Malayalam, our mother tongue. I saw in Dallas a copy of *Nadam* dated 28 February 1995 with my photo in it.

I was sitting near other bishops listening to the archbishop of Canterbury, George Carey at the famous Maramon Convention in Central Kerala.

Toronto

As I was about to board the flight from Dallas to Chicago and on to Toronto, Mrs. Rajamma Jacob, Maya's mother-in-law suggested that I should take a ride in the driverless, engineless train. I have never seen a tram or a train running without a driver or engine. This computerised tram was taking passengers from terminal to terminal at the Dallas airport. We got into this computerised tram of two or three compartments. After we got into it we began to wonder whether it was taking us to our terminal or to a different one. There was not much time left for the departure of my flight. Before my worry developed into a panic we reached the terminal from where I commenced my first engineless tram ride.

At Toronto an Indian who was sitting at the immigration desk, asked me several questions about Christians in India. He showed interest in the history of the Syrian Church in India. I was about to ask him whether he was a Christian or a Hindu, but I did not.

At the immigration desk at the international airports, we are expected to be answering questions and not asking questions to the officials. We are at the mercy of the officials. Despite the fact that I have a valid visa, everything can go topsy turvey if the officials intend to create obstacles to the aliens like me attempting to enter a foreign country.

Joly Palissery was waiting for me at the airport. Almost all the passengers who arrived in that flight had left the airport. I was giving a lecture about Indian Christianity to the immigration officials. I was happy that I could finally satisfy him by answering all his queries about the history of the Church in India, my favourite topic.

Palissery family has migrated from Kerala to Toronto. Francis Palissery the eldest son of late John from Palissery family in Trichur but living in Arnakulam migrated to Canada in 1970s. Later his brother Joly and sister Usha and their widowed mother also moved to Toronto.

Way back in 1977 when I visited Canada for the first time I met Francis. At that time he was single. By May 1991 the family had swelled in size. At that time the younger brother, Joly had come to Church service with his new bride, Seena, an engineer from India. Now Seena's brother and mother had left India for good. Seena's baby "Annaika" is the darling of the family. She looked at me from a distance. Despite my record for being the best babysitter in Princeton, U. S. A., I didn't succeed to be close to this 2-year-old baby.

Sunday 25th June was the 34th anniversary of my ordination to the rank of a deacon in this ancient Church in India. I celebrated Holy Qurbana at St. Shmooni at 100 Clinton Street, Hamilton, a distance of about an hour drive from Toronto. President Clinton may be well known but Clinton Street is not that easily known outside Hamilton. But if one follows the direction properly the Shmooni Church is easily accessible.

Take Highway 403 to Hamilton. Exit on SEW to Niagara. Exit on Burlington St. East. Turn left on Gage Ave. Turn right on Beach Road, Turn right on Clinton St. The directions are given here for those who want to go there. It is also helpful for the readers in India, to get a glimpse how road directions are given. Even with detailed maps, many of us sometimes go round and round missing an exit.

It is always better to telephone and get proper directions before going to any place. Also take with you the telephone number and call somebody for correct direction once you are lost. The people at gas stations may help. But I am told that men in America do not ask for directions even if they are lost. The women are said to be better in seeking help. They get out of the car and ask for directions from somebody once they know that they are lost.

I was happy to celebrate Qurbana in this new Church. In 1977 when I made my visit to Canada we had no Church in that country. In 1991 when I visited Toronto for the second time I conducted Qurbana in an Ukrainian Catholic Church in Toronto on May 26th.

I was happy that we had purchased a Church to offer services on a regular basis. The building belonged to Protestant denomination and we named it after St. Shmooni, a Jewish mother who became a martyr after seeing her six sons becoming martyrs for their faith. For generations their families were Jewish even before the time of Christ. St. Shmooni is a favourite saint for the Assyrians.

Patriarch Mar Adhai II's brother-in-law is the second deacon now, assisting at this parish. Now two brothers and two sisters of Patriarch Mar Adhai II are living in Toronto with their families. It was a pleasure to meet some Assyrians whom I had met in my previous visit in 1991.

During my visits to the USA in 1992 and 1993, I could not visit Canada due to lack of time. In 1994 I did not cross the Atlantic, limiting my visits to England and Europe. It was good to be with the Assyrians once again in Canada.

Nineveh is an Assyrian newspaper. I saw its first issue dated July 1-16, 1995 in which there was an interview with Fr. Diodoros Mukhti, the priest of St. Shmooni Church. The editor Ashur S Malek interviewed me and the issue No. 2 dated 17-31, July, 1995 had a wide coverage about me with my photo. The heading on the first page is *"Assyrians in Canada welcome Mar Aprem, a great lesson of love, friendship, peace and respect."*

The first line begins: "His Holiness, Mar Aprem." Many people may not know that "His Holiness" is a title reserved for the Pope or the Patriarch. The Metropolitans

are generally referred to as His Grace or Most Revd. Some may ask what is in a title. Of course it can offend some. Some people believe that the media including newspapers can make or break a person's image. It may indeed be true that some heroes are made by the media.

Mr. Ashur S. Malik, the editor of *Nineveh* who interviewed me for the newspaper is a young man. *Nineveh* is an English Biweekly published for the Assyrians. Through this paper, he is giving wide coverage of the activities of the Assyrian people around Toronto area. Some Assyrians have patronised this paper with their advertisements. I wish him all the best.

Nineveh newspaper has articles in Arabic also. Many Assyrians use Arabic which is the official language in Iraq and Syria from where most of these Assyrians have come. Some of the Advertisers announce their Assyrian origins in their advertisements. Shamiramis Super market, Nohadra food, Arabella Restaurant, Olivia's Floral Design (Book Any Occasion with Olivia Booko), Julianna's Furniture, Isaac Furniture, New Hadra Social Club, St. Shmoon Banquet, Jamel Driving, Orhay Club, Nohadra Video, Namrod Driving Instructor and Lawash Bakery, were some of the advertisers in this newspaper.

Assyrians came to Canada in the early part of the present century. The Assyrians came first to North Battleford, Saskatchewan. The early Assyrians laboured hard to turn the virgin prairie soil into farmland of wheat and cereals. Now there are only a few Assyrian remnant families at Battleford.

In Ontario nobody can forget the pioneer settler Rev. Karem Guergis who reached Canada in 1912. After graduating from McGill University he served as a minister in Anger, Ontario for 58 years.

Now Assyrians are found in Toronto as well as Hamilton, Windsor, London, Montreal, Edmonton, Calgary, Saskatoon and Vancouver. My contact was mainly with the Assyrians in Toronto and Hamilton.

Dr. Arian Ishaya Ph. D. in his well authenticated article on the Assyrians of Canada in *Nineveh* (Vol. 18, No. 1 & 2, 1995) records the early history of the Assyrians who migrated to Canada. He writes in P. 17

The Assyrian community in Ontario dates back to the mid-1960's when Canadian Immigration established the system providing quotas for immigrants from the Middle East. In 1966 there were no more than 4 Assyrian families in Toronto. Since then, there has been a steady flow of immigrants through chain migration with peak periods in the early 1970's due to the Kurdo-Iraqi war, when Assyrians of Northern Iraq were driven out of their villages; in the mid-1980's in the aftermath of the Iraq-Iran war, when Assyrians suffered great casualties in the protracted war, as the young men were enlisted in the armies of both countries (Assyrians are citizens in both countries); and in the early 1990s following the Persian Gulf war. By 1993 there were 6,000 Assyrians in Toronto, 120 families in Hamilton, about 40 families in Windsor, and 200 families in London, Ontario. Most of the Assyrians in Ontario came from towns and villages of Northern Iraq or the capital city of Baghdad. The rest were from Iran and Turkey.

About the Assyrians in London Arian Ishaya says that it is "unique in the sense that almost all of its members were of the Tyari tribe (one of the eight major clans of the Assyrian highlanders) from the village of Tel Tama in Syria."

The home of the Assyrian people were in the Hakkari mountains. After the World War I, in 1918, they became homeless. Eventually a group of them settled down in the villages near Khabour River in Syria in 1941. The leader of that tribe Malik Yacob Ismail later migrated to London, Ontario. In the above mentioned article we read (P. 17)

The Assyrians of London, Ontario have a Church by the name of the Holy Apostolic Catholic Assyrian Church of the East. The sanctuary was purchased in 1986. A new civic organization by the name of Assyrian Ishtar Association, established in 1993, had the goal of starting Assyrian language and heritage classes.

The Assyrian settlement in Toronto is the largest. The Assyrian Church of the East (new calendar) claims membership of 450 families. The Assyrian Church has a quarterly publication by the name of *Scholion* in three languages i. e., Assyrian, English and Arabic.

About the community in Hamilton Arian Ishaya records : (P. 18)

"Although the Assyrian community in Hamilton has its own church and sanctuary (The Ancient Apostolic Catholic Church of the East, better,

known as Mart Shmoon old calendar church), and its own civic organization (Assyrian Club of Hamilton), Assyrians of Hamilton (as well as Windsor, Ontario) do not hesitate to drive to Toronto to participate in educational programs or special events."

I could visit Sunny Nellangara and Shanta in Mississauga. During my visit to Canada, I stayed in four different homes. Joly Palissery, Chinnan & Molly Mookan, Dr. Nishi and her husband Binoy Jacob, and Tony Emmatty & Molly. I made also a brief visit to my second cousin Darro Mookan who had arrived in Canada, with his family since my last visit.

I had lunch in the house of my Assyrian friend Awiqam Khamis in Hamilton where I stayed in 1991 during my previous visit. I also visited the house of Deacon Ammanuel. Many Assyrians wanted me to visit their homes. But four days were too short a time to visit every home that I wanted to visit. My blessings to all whom I visited and whom I could not visit.

CHAPTER 6

Atlanta to Columbus

It was after midnight my flight reached Atlanta, Georgia. My brother Addison had not yet arrived at the airport. I looked for my baggage. All the bags that arrived on the conveyor belt were taken away by fellow-passengers. I could not find any trace of my baggage. When I reported the lost baggage they began to note down the details of the size and colour of my suitcase. Then at last they asked my name. When I replied "Mar Aprem", they stopped writing, saying, "Your suitcase was here for some time."

My unusual name helped them to recognize me instantly. They must have noticed my peculiar name on the suitcase, a name they probably had never heard in their life. Moreover they must have noticed the poor quality of the Indian suitcase.

They went inside and handed over my suitcase. I asked them how it came in an earlier flight; but there was no answer to that question. I did not want to pursue my investigation further, because I got my suitcase back. It was already after midnight. By that time my brother arrived and we wanted to get back home without further delay.

There are half a million Indian born immigrants in America. According to the survey taken by the Census

Bureau in 1994 their number was 494,000. In recent years between 20,000 and 30,000 Indians migrate to the United States annually. Then there are children born in America to the Indian immigrants. Technically we can call these children Americans as they were born in America, although both their parents were born in India.

There are some other Indians born in Germany, Malaysia, England etc. who migrated to America, like my own niece Maya born in England but married to George Jacob, an Indian born in India but brought up in America. My brother Addison's wife Molly who lives in Atlanta is neither Indian born nor American born. She was born in Malaysia where her parents were living at that time. Since then they returned to India to settle down in Trivandrum. Thus there is a wide variety of Indians in the U. S. A. Many of these Indians do not know the language and culture of their parents.

Half a million Indians in America is a sizable group. But we should know that it is not the largest foreign group in America. Indians do not find a place in the top ten list of the foreigners in the U. S. India has the eleventh place. The top six are:

1.	Mexico	62.00	lakhs
2.	Philippines	10.00	„
3.	Cuba	8.05	„
4.	El Salvador	7.15	„
5.	Canada	6.79	„
6.	Germany	6.25	„

The Indian readers and some British readers will know that a lakh is 100,000. A million means ten lakhs.

The figures are given in lakhs assuming that the majority of the readers of this book are Indians and children of Indian origin. If the American born Indians have not heard the word "lakh" so far, this observation will help them learn this new word so commonly used in Indian English. Unfortunately American tourists visiting India have this confusion about million and lakhs. Indian interpreters translate million as lakh and confuse the figures often.

The Indians in America are mostly well educated and generally in reasonably satisfactory financial status. But that is unfortunately not the case with the Indians living in the homeland. However some states within India are rapidly progressing.

Recently a scientific study of about 174 nations was made based on the education, health, rate of growth etc. in each country. India has only 134th rank. India can comfort herself boasting that she is ahead of 40 other nations. It is lower than the ranking of the soccer game, where India is struggling to reach the 100th place. India often finds herself drifting in a rank between 104 and 114, even with the strenuous and scientific training given by the Uzbekistan coach Rustom Akramov.

After a short ride from the Atlanta airport, we reached my brother's house in the suburb. Grace Marie, his daughter, is nearly nine years old. Last year when she visited India she wrote two poems. I was amused to see my little niece as a writer.

This time she surprised me when she began to interview me as soon as I reached their new home in

Atlanta, Georgia. She announced that she was interviewing me for her newsletter named Oracle which is published fortnightly. She is the editor-in-chief of this newsletter. Her classmate is an assistant editor. She works on a computer to prepare her articles. My knowledge of computer is next to nothing.

She told me that she changed her idea to become a corporate lawyer, to make a million dollar a year. Now she would like to be a professor of Mathematics at the college level. She does not like to teach kids. This nine year old has even more plans. "I will get married at 26 and would have two kids by 30 years, two years apart." I have serious doubts whether she understands what she says about marriage and children.

Her interest in writing intrigues me. When I returned to India I read about Maya Chandrasekharan a girl aged 15 living in Bangalore. She has just finished High School. Her first novel *Janaki's First Term* was published in Calcutta when she was just 12 years old. Her second work *Priscilla Rebels* was published recently. She has signed a contract for more books with Harper Collins—and she is preparing 15 books more. I have a hunch that she might do it. She may publish her 21st book before she completes 21 years of age.

Grace Marie might change her dream to become a Maths Professor as she gets older and end up as a writer as her uncle. Writing has never been a fascination in the Mookken family. I wonder how I took to writing as a hobby. Grace Marie with her computer and tremendous opportunities a kid can get in the U. S. A. could outwrite her uncle who never published a book until 34 years of

age. But during the past 21 years I published 46 books more than I planned to accomplish

The concluding remark about Maya in SPECTRUM in *Indian Express* dated July 16, 1995 (p 7) is worth quoting as the present writer agrees with it and perhaps almost all beginners in the field of writing have discovered.

“Despite her love for writing, Maya wants to enter advertising. And she has a practical, hard-headed reason for this: writing does not seem to pay.”

I hope little Grace Marie will not be dissuaded from publishing her fortnightly *Oracle*. It will be interesting to read what a nine-year-old girl thinks about the elder brother of her Daddy whom she may see only once after every two or three years.

My brother took me to see the Atlanta Centennial Olympic stadium in Atlanta where the 1996 Olympic games are scheduled for July 20 to August 3. This big new stadium is being built very close to the existing county stadium. Many people had doubted whether Atlanta could provide the amenities required for the Olympic games. The estimated expense exceeds one and a half billion dollars.

The hotel rooms are already booked for the July-August 1996. My brother says he could vacate his house for a fortnight and could earn \$1,500 as rent per week. Some residents in the neighbourhoods of Atlanta are already planning to rent their homes during the games.

The rent of \$1,500 per week which the residents can earn is not a big amount, if they plan to buy tickets for the major events in the Olympics. Admission tickets to Olympic games have a high price and already difficult to get. June 30th was the last day to apply for tickets at normal rates. On 29th June my brother was trying to apply for tickets for some minor events. Even tickets to minor events will be hard to purchase at normal price by the end of 1995.

The total progress of the city of Atlanta is the dream of the residents. They say that they got in one year what they would not have got even if they had tried for 16 years under normal circumstances. By hosting the Olympic Games, Atlanta would be counted as one of the 15 international cities.

My niece Grace Marie and I posed for the photographs in front of the Olympic stadium. Two or three Afro-Americans who were drunk came that way and Grace Marie was scared. She wanted to get back to the car quickly.

Atlanta is the capital city of the State of Georgia. I saw the golden (bronze?) coloured dome of the headquarters of the government of Georgia. By the time the Olympic Games will begin in July 1996 Atlanta will have received wide publicity.

Addison had just moved from Ann Arbor, Michigan to Atlanta, Georgia. Some Kerala friends, who are related to Addison's wife Molly came for supper, when we had a house-warming ceremony in their new house in Atlanta. In America people do not establish permanent homes,

They move around looking for better jobs. In India people prefer to stay at the same job they start rather than seek new adventures.

Georgie who lives in the state of Georgia was a student in the Veterinary College in Trichur many years ago. He is the brother of the captain Raju, who is famous in the Malayalam movies. Raju was a captain in the Army who resigned his job and succeeded in the highly competitive film world. He is also a cousin of Molly. There are many Mollis among her cousins. I think they are distinguished by the names of their husbands, namely, Addison's Molly, Chinnan's Molly, Thampan's Molly and so on. I hope the women's liberation movement will forgive them using the names of husbands.

My *Sitar* was with Addison. He never learned to play this instrument. Thus I got a chance to play my own instrument. When I played my favourite Malayalam devotional song *Deiva Kripayil gnan ashrayichu*..... the children in the house gathered near me. I later watched in India the video of this event. I was pleasantly surprised to notice the awe with which my captivated audience was listening to my *sitar* performance.

The Syrian Orthodox priest in the area came with his wife and two grown-up children. The priest is a working priest. Many Syrian Orthodox as well as Orthodox Syrian (two groups in the same church) priests from India living in America are working in secular jobs to earn their living. But they do their spiritual duties to the faithful of their own Christian denominations and conduct services in Malayalam language.

On Friday 30 June 1995 at 10 a. m. we started from Atlanta headed north to Columbus, Ohio. We were told that it would take ten or eleven hours to reach Columbus. My brother Addison, his wife Molly and their son Aprem aged 17 were our drivers in turn. My little niece Grace Marie kept talking. Since I did not know driving I was a silent or sometimes a sleepy partner in this trip. It was a memorable experience. We drove through to states of Tennessee and Kentucky.

Columbus, Ohio

We reached the house of my elder sister Leela living in Columbus. Her daughter Asha was getting married to Paul Furlow, an American. Our family was going international.

My eldest brother Jose Mookken came with his family from San Diego. Our second sister Suseela arrived from Rugby, England with her son Varkey. Hence with my two brothers (No. 1 and No. 8) and two sisters (No. 2 and No. 6) we were five. It was the first time five of us were gathered at one place outside India. We had five more in Kerala. Numbers 3, 4, 7, 9 and 10.

We were happy for this rare get-together. Many Indian and American friends dropped in to help at the final preparations for the wedding.

On Saturday July 1st we had a wedding rehearsal and a dinner. It was mainly for family members. We didn't mingle much with American guests who were family members or friends of Paul. We talked in Malayalam and formed our own inner circle most of the time, which

I must confess, was not the ideal. Miki Mookan, the younger daughter of my brother Jose, went around and mingled with the American friends.

On Sunday July 2nd was the wedding. More than 250 people attended the wedding ceremony in the Presbyterian Church located on E. Broad Street in Columbus. The music was good provided by the Director of the Music Jim Hildreth and Asha's friend Sheryl Space. The Church is quite a big one constructed in the last century.

We had rehearsed earlier on the previous day the procession as well as the actual ceremony. Rev. Thomas York, Vicar of the Broad Street Presbyterian Church in Columbus, was present to give a brief opening talk giving advice to the couple.

Alesa Jacob was the Flower girl and I was afraid that the 5-year-old girl would not be able to stand through the 45 minute ceremony. The Ring bearer Tull Neal Gerreald sat down soon after he finished his duty of carrying the ring and placing it on the table. The junior bridesmaid Grace Marie Mookan, my nine-year-old niece, (not yet nine, she corrects me) stood throughout the service.

Among bridegroom's (Paul's) three attendants, two were his own sisters, Laura and Catharine. But for Asha she had only one brother Dr. Sajiv and no sisters. Therefore she had to ask two of her school mates, Rebecca Dilligham and Mark Alexiou to complete the pair of three attendants.

Although the number of attendants on either side is three each, I noticed that the bride had two male and one female attendants while the groom had two female and one male attendants. I do not think that there is any rule about the number or gender of the attendants at weddings.

Among the five ushers I noticed just one Indian, Subash Alias. Most of the guests on Asha's party were Indians, while almost all the guests of Paul were Americans. The Indians happened to be seated on the right side of the chapel, not because of any racial discrimination, but just because the right side was reserved for the bride's party and the left for the bride groom's party.

The Bible lessons were read by four youngsters from our family and one older man from the groom's side. I must admit with appreciation that the youngsters (the youngest of which was my namesake Aprem Mookan, my nephew aged 17) read the Psalms very well. Some say that they read better than their old uncle, who had been trained to read the Bible properly. My only excuse for reading too fast is that it allows most people who want to get back home quickly may do so.

A very touching part of the ceremony was after I had pronounced the benediction. The couple recited together the following Personal Vows. I was happy to know that they had themselves written the script. Although they had originally planned to read it one after another, they changed their minds and read it in unison. I do not know why they changed their plan at the last moment,

Perhaps they could not decide who should read first. No, they did it in unison. Nobody is first or last. Equal rights for husband and wife.

Personal Vows

I promise to love you my entire life.

I promise to love and respect the whole you.

I promise to help nurture your mental, spiritual and physical livelihood.

I promise to forgive.

I promise to cherish your family as I do my own.

I promise to provide a stable home from which to venture forth and a home to which you may always safely return.

I promise to hear what is unsaid and to listen with effort.

I promise to provide humour when life is cluttered.

I promise to help you impact the world in which we live.

In front of our family and friends, please accept this oath of my affection and commitment.

I am impressed by the theology and contents of this vow. I thought that they have borrowed it from some secular scholar or theologian. Asha says they themselves wrote it. It is meaningful. Sometimes I feel that lay people and young people in our Churches should be left alone to write their prayers. They can word it better than some theologians. I suspect that Asha must have added the words, "I promise to provide humour when life is cluttered" because she knows that her uncle has written books like *"Holy Humour"*, and *Bishops Jokes*.

After the solemn ceremony there were photograph sessions. All guests were asked to pick up a bottle of bubbles to be blown on the bride and the groom as they were sent off in a horse carriage. I noticed that the driver of the horse carriage was a young girl. They went for a ride for a few minutes through the streets and came back to the Church.

After the wedding, the guests moved to the reception hall, a few miles away. Asha changed into an Indian saree and joined the crowd who had gathered at the club for the dinner. All guests had name tags to find their place at the table. By mistake, I picked up the name tag of my nephew. I thought Aprem Mookan was my name. In India I have no relatives named Aprem. There was no other name tag for Mar Aprem. When I realised that I had taken the name tag of my nephew, I gave it to him. I found my place at the head table, next to the bride. I know in the church the bishops have a special place.

There was dance after the wedding dinner. Since I did not care to learn the "four d's", of American culture (drinking, dating, driving and dancing) I went home along with my younger sister who had come from England. For her daughter's wedding in England in May 1994 there was no dancing. The Americans as well as British enjoy dancing at the wedding receptions. Not only the young, but also the old enjoy dancing. Bridegroom's maternal grandmother who looked fragile, danced to her heart's content capturing the attention and applause of the guests. I deliberately refrained from referring to her as the old grandma. Firstly, because she is younger than the bride's maternal grandma. Secondly, I am told that women in America cease to grow old after they are thirty.

When Mrs. Indira Gandhi was Prime Minister of India during my student days in the U. S. A. (1966-68) I have heard that she had requested President Lyndon Johnson to excuse her from dancing as it was not considered decent custom in India.

Weddings generally reflect the socio-economic status of the parents of the bride and the groom. They often involve wasteful expenditures and variety of programmes including dancing. Certain governments may even prohibit wedding programmes such as dancing. A few illustrative cases are given below.

The Reuter reports on 5 September 1995 from Teheran that a bride has been sentenced to 85 lashes by an Islamic court in Iran for dancing with men at her wedding. The court in the holy city of Mashhad sentenced also 127 guests at the Western style wedding to floggings or fines and jailed one man. The police had issued warnings to organise weddings by strict Islamic rules with separate rooms for men and women. No dancing or unauthorised music is permitted there.

The newspapers in India are agog with the news of the mega wedding of Sudhakaran, the foster son of the Miss Jayalalitha, the actress turned Chief Minister of Tamilnadu, scheduled for September 6 and 7. Decorative arches and serial bulbs were put up on a 10-km stretch for the wedding reception. The estimated expense for this wedding is expected to exceed 300 million rupees.

An Indian businessman based in Dubai conducted the wedding of his son last year in an aeroplane. Now he plans his daughter's wedding in a submarine. He

delights in spending millions of rupees for the special V. I. P. wedding. He wants his guests as well as the public to talk about this dream wedding. He argues that it is his right to spend his money for the weddings of his children. The public has no business to condemn his extravaganza.

Indian brides usually are decorated with expensive sarees and golden ornaments. The newspaper report of the marriage of the foster son of the Chief Minister of Tamilnadu is illustrative. This marriage that took place on September 7, 1995 in Madras is described as "the marriage of the century."

The cost of the wedding festivities was 300 million rupees or 9.6 million dollars. It is not quite ten million dollars as a dollar is converted into 31.5 rupees instead of Rs. 30 as in the last year. The *Indian Express* dated 8 September 1995 reports:

The cynosure of all eyes should have been the bride, who was first dressed in glittering golden yellow saree, and later changed to a green zari saree and who had her shares of diamond jewellery too, on a day which should belong to her. But compelling attention by the dazzle around her entire person was the bridegroom's aunt Sashikala Natarajan (her husband was not sighted anywhere near the venue.)

Dressed up a glittering golden yellow Kanche-puram silk saree, her diamonds began from the tip of her forehead with a diamond chutti (teekah). The diamonds in the ears began with an elaborate

earstud which started from the upper ear to cover the entire ear. Two heavy necklaces, a thick diamond studded waist belt (ondiyanam), two thick diamond bangles around each wrist and diamond armlets (vanki) around the upper arm, and you had a collection of jewellery to literally leave you queasy.

Two women invitees were overheard debating whether the diamonds were real. The consensus was "If these are imitation, then real diamonds were never discovered."

I am told that Americans usually do not invite many guests for wedding receptions. But Indians in America invite at least two hundred guests. If it were held in India, the number of guests would swell into one thousand or two thousand. A huge amount is spent for wedding dinners. In some cases Indian wedding receptions are limited to just tea parties instead of dinners to reduce expenses.

Since weddings are "once in a life" affair for most people, there is a tendency for both the rich and the poor to celebrate it as best as possible. In middle income families such a reception often drags the family into large debts. The father of the bride struggles hard to make both ends meet after such receptions. I wish that a consensus can be achieved to limit wedding expenditures by some "guest control" legislation.

Since we were far away from the relatives we did not have to invite many relatives to the wedding. Although our third sister Prabha was in India she was represented

by her sister-in-law Lalitha and her husband David Oommen (Achenkunju) and their two daughters Sanju and Premu. From bride's father's relatives, a cousin K. I. Alexander working near Washington D. C. came for the wedding.

Among Trichur friends from our Church, Lisa, wife of Sebi, Chinnan and Molly, and Sunny and Santha were present. Sebi had to go to Trichur for his brother's wedding which I was to conduct a fortnight later on 16th July.

Babu Konikara a long-time friend from Trichur was there at the house on Saturday. Being a bachelor he does not attend weddings or dinner parties. It was nice to meet Babu Konikara as I did in 1993. Unfortunately a few weeks later Babu died in a car accident in Columbus. It was a sad duty for me to conduct this funeral in India on September 9th. A talented musician, and a beloved teacher of computer science, this 52-year-old man's life was lost by the carelessness of a truck driver who ignored the red traffic signal.

CHAPTER 7

World Malayalee Convention

From Columbus, Ohio I telephoned to Geevarghese Emmatty. He is called Cheru by the Trichur people and Charlie by others. Americans do not find it easy to pronounce the Syriac word Geevarghese (George). Charlie is easier for them to pronounce than the unfamiliar Cheru. Even Malayalees (Keralites) outside Trichur or Kunnankulam do not have the name Cheru.

The purpose of this telephone call was to let him know that the next day, i. e., Monday July 3rd I was to fly from Columbus to J. F. Kennedy airport in New York and the next day I was to return to India. The taped message in his house informed me that the whole family was busy with the World Malayalee Convention. The next day I called again. I was able to catch him just before he went back to the Convention. He told me that I would be picked at J. F. K. airport and would be driven direct to the Convention site.

The World Malayalee Convention was held on July 1-3, 1995 at Garden State Exhibit Center & the Radisson Hotel in Somerset, New Jersey, near New York. This Convention was an International Conference and Cultural Festival of Keralites. Many Malayalees from all over the world participated in this event which was widely

publicised by the Malayalam newspapers in Kerala. Some Malayalam newspapers reach the Malayalees living in America.

Thomas Abraham who was Mayor of Teaneck, New Jersey was a major Grand Sponsor of this Convention. Mr. Kurian Chacko, Mr. Andrew Pappachen, John Panicker, Toby Mathew and Babu were other Grand Sponsors. Dr. George K Jacob, Alex Koshy Vilanilam, Thomas Mathew, and Thomas V. Jacob were Patrons. In the category of Benefactors were George Oomen Thampachen, Mathew P, Varghese, Mathew, Baisal Nelson and Varghese Zachariah.

The two sons of Geevarghese Emmatty (Miki & Munna) were at the airport to drive me to Somerset in New Jersey. At the hotel Geevarghese met me with the organizers of the Convention. As I entered the Convention hall, I met Mrs. Lekha Srinivasan, Vice President (Reception) of the Executive Committee. Then another lady asked me "Are you Mar Aprem Thirumeni?" I said, "Yes." Then I began to ransack my memory as to who this person was. She said, "I am Anthappen Master's sister-in-law", and instantly I recognized her. I said, "Oh, Dr. Mary, we met in Toronto in 1977." Actually I had met her in Trichur after I had met her in Toronto 18 years ago.

Dr. Mary belonged to my Church and was married to a Roman Catholic Church member Mr. Charles Kannankeril. He was Co-Chairperson of the Planning Committee of this World Malayalee Convention. Dr. Mary's cousin Omana, again a member of my Church, was married to Jolly Mookan, my cousin, a Roman

Catholic as his father (my father's younger brother) had joined the Catholic Church for his marriage 58 years ago. Yes, we were ecumenical in the matter of marriages even at that time when the word ecumenism was unheard of. I wonder when the word "ecumenism" was coined in the English language.

Mr. T. N. Seshan, the controversial Chief Election Commissioner of India, had finished his talk. The organizers introduced me to the audience and I stood up as they applauded.

My mind went back to an event 27 years ago when I was studying for Doctor of Theology (Th. D.) degree at Princeton Theological Seminary in the same State of New Jersey. The Indian Association in New Jersey staged the drama "Sacrifice" written by the Bengalee Nobel laureate Rabindranath Tagore. Another Bengalee Tharun Datt I. A. S. who retired in 1993 or so as Chief Secretary of West Bengal was to direct the play. His I. A. S. colleague Mr. Govindan Kutty (who died some years ago) was from Trichur. Seeing my beard they requested me to be the *Pujari* (Priest) in the drama. I agreed. Was I not a priest in my real life? But the director instructed me that I should take off my cassock, bare my chest and show the *poonul* (sacred thread) worn by the Hindu priest. I decided to quit. But they made me the King, the major role in that drama!

The finale of the convention was the beauty contest. The dress was to suit Kerala culture. It was not the usual beauty pageant where contestants display as much as they want to show. Actually in Kerala some women had

protested vehemently against the beauty contest when, the Kerala entrant to this world contest was chosen.

Tina Philip stood first. Saraswathi Mohan from Chenganachery, who came all the way from India, came second. The third place went to Ansu Varghese.

The 4th and 5th rank were given to Ramya Lakshmanan (Abu Dhabi) and Shina Xavier (U. S. A.). The other contestants were Sheila Nair from Kuala Lumpur, Jessy Mathew from San Antonio, Texas, Tracy Thomas, daughter of T. M. Thomas and Beena Mathews from Atlanta.

Miss Tina Philip was selected not only on the basis of her physical beauty, but also of her intelligence and other abilities. Tina aged 19 is planning a degree in Molecular Biology from the University of Michigan. She graduated from High School (normally at the age of 18, and not 15 as the students in India) with *Summa Cum Laude* i. e., distinction as we say in India. She knows Bharata Natyam (dance), plays piano and is a member of the choir in the Mar Thoma Church in Detroit, Michigan.

Sobhana, the well known actress from Kerala, was there to crown the Miss World Malayalee; Mrs. Padmini Ramachandran, the middle one of the famous three Travancore sisters of my younger days, was there. Other cine artists like Sukumari, Innocent and Madhu were there. Mr. T. M. Jacob, Minister of Culture, Kerala, M. A. Baby (Marxist member of Rajya Sabha) and some other V. I. P. s. were also there. Dr. P. K. Abraham, the dynamic editor of *Deepika* daily, spoke a few words.

I was sitting there till after midnight because there was a dance while the judges were tallying their marks for the contestants of the beauty contest. Milne, daughter of Geevarghese Emmatty, whom I had baptised some years ago (I do not remember how many years ago) in India, was participating in that dance. The whole family wanted me to watch it.

At 2 a. m. the World Malayalee Convention came to an end. We packed and drove to the house of Emmattys at Bergenfield in New Jersey, where we reached at 4 a. m. We woke up before noon.

Dr. James Raphael and his wife Elsy whom I had visited 3 years ago lived in Teaneck. But there was no time to visit them. Dr. James with his three children came to spend an hour with me. He asked, "Do you want the controversial 547-page-novel *The Satanic Verses* written by Salman Rushdie?". I declined the offer because this book is a prohibited one in India. They could catch me at the Customs in Bombay if they found me with such a forbidden book while entering India. It contained nothing against India, but it wounded the religious sentiments of some Indians who belong to the Islamic faith. The newspapers say that Rushdie's recent book written in his seclusion in England has some remarks derogatory to Indian leaders especially Mahatma Gandhi.

In the afternoon we went to Ignatius Nellangara, an engineer from Trichur. He is the cousin of my brother-in-law, Dr. N. V. George who is an Associate Specialist in General Medicine & Geriatrics in Rugby, England. It was nice to visit Ignatius after 18 years. In 1977 I had stayed with him. His daughter Reena was a small girl then.

This year she is married to an American boy. People from Trichur are getting settled down all over the world.

At 10 p. m. our Kuwait Airways took off from J. F. Kennedy International Airport. It was July 4th. I looked down from the sky. Manhattan was colourful, with the July 4th fire works, the American Independence day. I have been in America on July 4th in 1967 and 1968. But it was the first time I could have an aerial view of the American fire works. I said to myself, "The fireworks of Trichur *Pooram* festival is better than this."

CHAPTER 8

Washington Via Paris

My next trip to the U. S followed five weeks after my return to India after Asha's wedding, on Sunday August 13th 1995. I reached Madras at 8-30 a. m. by train from Trichur. As the train was late, I rushed to the Mar Qardagh Church or Qurbana. It was nice to meet the parishioners in Madras.

Mar Qardagh Church is the first Church I built after becoming a Metropolitan. It is also the first Church I re-built, as the old edifice did not have strong foundation. Although the Church appeared to be strong in 1970 at the time of its consecration, by 1986 or so a crack began to appear pre warning imminent danger. Therefore the old building was pulled down and a new Church built in February 1993. After a period of waiting, I was able to dedicate the newly built Church.

In the afternoon I dedicated the second floor of the western wing of the Mar Thoma Matriculation Higher Secondary School. It was 22 years ago Rev. K. J. Jos, a High School teacher encouraged me to found an English Medium school in honour of my mentor and predecessor in office Mar Thoma Darmo.

Land value has soared in India during the last 15 years or so. Seventy cents of land (nearly $\frac{3}{4}$ of an acre) which

cost Rs. 28,000 in 1975 appreciated its value by 100 times. The same plot of land now costs 2.8 million rupees which is about 90 thousand US dollars. In India I would prefer to say it is nearly one million dollars. Valuation differs on different items. One dollar can fetch 32 cups of tea in India instead of one or two cups in America. The current rate of exchange for dollar is Rs. 32.

I would say that with the cost of ten eggs in the U. S. A. one can purchase 32 eggs in India. I will have to pay $2\frac{1}{2}$ or 3 dollars to buy 32 eggs in the U. S. A. This is not however true in the area of medicine. I pay \$ 16 for 10 cc of humulin *monotard* insulin for my diabetes. I have to pay exactly the same amount \$ 16 to purchase the same insulin in America. I purchase medicine in India because unlike in the U. S. A. the Indian pharmacists do not demand doctor's prescription. It would cost too much for some one like me to get a doctor's prescription or to buy medical insurance.

Most of the Indians buy all the medicines they need in India before they visit the U. S. A. For diabetes, pills are cheaper than insulin. In India we manufacture different brands such as Dionil, Euglucon, Diebniz, Glicephage etc. After managing my diabetes with Euglucon and later with Glicaphage, I changed to insulin in June 1993. Pills may have adverse side effects on liver and other organs. Hence I suffer with pleasure the pain of insulin injection.

By JET Airways, a private company operating domestic flights in India, I reached Bombay from Madras. At Bombay there is a free coach to take us from the domestic airport to the International airport. Some

passengers unaware of this free facility hire taxi or buy ticket in the coaches going to the International airport. Their agents will force passengers into buying a ticket or hiring a taxi. I only wish these agents stop "helping" the passengers. All the passengers should be left alone to decide what they want. Some passengers may hire a taxi rather than using the courtesy coach of the Jet Airways or other vehicles which ply between the terminals. It should be the free choice of the passengers.

At about 2 a. m. after midnight Air France flight took off from Bombay. After flying for 9 hours we landed at 11 a. m. Indian time on Monday August 14th at Charles De Gaulle airport in Paris. Although my watch showed 11 a. m., it was only 7.30 a. m. in France. It was $3\frac{1}{2}$ hours behind Indian time. I thought France was $4\frac{1}{2}$ hours behind us. Then I remembered that the winter time is one hour behind the summer time. In winter France will be $4\frac{1}{2}$ hours behind India.

In 1983 I travelled by Air France when my friend Rev. C. G. David, Vicar General of the Mar Thoma Syrian Church, died in flight while we were flying from Bombay to Paris on our way to the conference of Itinerant Evangelists in Amsterdam. During the past 12 years I had used many international airlines such as KLM, Alitalia, British Airways, Air India, Kuwait Airways, Scandinavian Airways, Aeroflot, American Airlines, Air Lanka, Singapore Airlines, Thai Airways, Lufthansa, Cathery Pacific etc.

Based on my experience, Air France is a good airline. They were showing in their publicity videos that they have developed the best comfortable seats for

passengers. They claim that the passengers do not feel the strain of the air-journey if they travel by Air France.

They assigned me a seat close to the children's area. I wondered whether they knew that I was a good baby-sitter in Princeton. When I saw a child sitting next to me and in front of me I was afraid that they would disturb the little rest I was hoping to get at night. Fortunately the steward distributed toys and other presents for the children to keep them occupied. It was a good idea to give toys and cartoons to the travelling children. The children are by nature active and can never be quiet. It is difficult for them to be tied to a seat. They want to run around and get home quick.

Air France flew non-stop from Bombay to Paris. It was not good to be sitting for nine hours continuously. I never got up from my seat during that nine hours. Therefore when I got up after arrival in Paris, I found it a little difficult to get up. I should have moved around once or twice during that long nine hours of flight to facilitate blood circulation.

In my previous flights in other airlines, we used to stop in Kuwait or Dubai for refuelling. I did not like getting up from my seat in the middle of the night within four or five hours of our departure from Bombay. In some cases the aircraft was to be cleaned at an airport and we were to get out of the aircraft and wait in the transit area. The waiting passengers pass through the "security area" again to re-board the same aircraft.

Flight from Paris to Washington was by the United Airlines. It was a non-stop flight. We left Paris at

about 12-20 p. m. and reached Washington D. C. by 2-50 p. m. Although my watch clocked the flight only about $2\frac{1}{2}$ hours, the actual time was about $8\frac{1}{2}$ hours as there was a time difference of about 6 hours. Paris was $3\frac{1}{2}$ hours behind India and Washington D. C. was $9\frac{1}{2}$ hours behind India. In winter time Paris would have been $4\frac{1}{2}$ hours behind India and Washington D. C. would be $10\frac{1}{2}$ hours behind us.

In the U. S. A. there are five time zones. In Summer while New York and Washington D. C. Boston etc. are $9\frac{1}{2}$ hours behind, Chicago will be $10\frac{1}{2}$ hours behind India. California will be $12\frac{1}{2}$ hours. It is necessary to know this difference. It is not pleasant to telephone from California at 10 p. m. to friends in New York. New Yorkers will be fast asleep at that time as will be one hour after midnight.

My stay in Washington D. C. was in the house of Jonathan Sanford who works as an Analyst in International Political Economy for the Congressional Research Service at the Library of Congress in the U. S. capital. His house is located at the 11th street N E between F and G. avenues. I had stayed in that house in 1992 and it was nice to be with Dr. Sanford and his wife Carol and their three daughters Susan, Alice and Jane.

The girls are three years older now than my previous visit and there is more noise and life in the house. As I have been living in the Metropolitan's Palace which is comparatively a quiet place it was intriguing for me to be in the quarrelling crowd. I do not know how to compare or comment about the behaviour of children in the U. S.

and of the children in India. I think that the American parents give more freedom to their children than the Indian parents in general.

Dr. Sanford and Carol were busy with their work. I took advantage of the situation and went on my own to visit my friend Fr. Sidney Griffith of the Catholic University of America which is not far from the place of my stay. It was my first visit to the Catholic University.

Fr. Sidney Griffith and Monica T. Blanchard, the Semitic Librarian in the Catholic University, showed me the Syriac books. The MSS are not many as it is not an old university.

As I got some time for relaxation and reading in the house of Dr. Jonathan Sanford, I read the *Interpreter*, a magazine of the United Methodist Church for July-August 1995. The cover story "When the pastor's a woman" was interesting and informative. In 1993 there were 5,147 women among the clergy of the United Methodist Church in America. In 1984 the figure was 2680. The number of women in the Methodist seminaries had grown from 600 in 1984 to 1264 in 1993. The District Superintendents, the clergy who have authority over several pastors, were 70 in 1993 as against 21 in 1984. There are six active bishops and two retired women bishops. The late Bishop Marjorie Matthews of Wisconsin was the first lady bishop in any Church.

In 1969 Carol Cox a student of the Union Theological Seminary (from where I took S. T. M. degree in 1967) applied for the post of a pastor in a New York suburban parish. But her application was rejected probably due

to church tradition against women clergy. Now many women graduates from the Union Theological Seminary serve several denominations as pastors.

I was happy to read about Francis Asbury, the first Methodist Bishop in America. The Methodists do not have any bishop in England. Actually John Wesley, the Anglican clergyman who is the founder of the Methodist Movement in England, did not approve of the idea of Bishops in the Methodist Church. Asbury who was born in August 1745 died on March 31st 1816.

I was pleasantly surprised to read that Bishop Asbury who was 5' 9" tall weighed only 150 pounds. My height is three inches less than bishop Asbury. But I find it difficult even to keep my weight at 150 pounds. I am around 165 pounds. I think 150 pounds for a tall man will make him look really skinny. Perhaps in olden times people were not as heavy as we are today.

During 1771-1816 Bishop Asbury travelled 2,75,000 miles and preached 16,000 sermons. I do not know exactly how many miles I have travelled. Perhaps it is also 2,75,000 miles. But today travel is easy compared to the times of Francis Asbury who had to travel by horse, by water and by wagon. They were the pioneers who were the real athletes for the Lord. In modern times we do not grasp fully the sacrifices they had made to build up our churches, denominations and institutions, the benefits of which we enjoy today.

ICON And Book Service is known to me some years ago when they operated their bookshop from Fordham University in New York. Now this bookshop which

specialises in books on the eastern Churches has shifted its location to 1217 Quincy St, NE, Washington D. C. There was a Syriac symposium II held at the Catholic University on June 8-10, 1995. Fr. Sidney Griffith of the Catholic University handed over a file of the Symposium for me to see. There I noticed a colourful catalogue of this bookshop.

All persons at the ICON and Book Service "strive to make available to the faithful materials which can assist in the deepening of religious piety and the increase in knowledge of the things of God and our Holy Orthodox Faith, Hieromonk David and the sisters and monks in the nearby Orthodox monastery work at this bookshop. But Ellaine, who works there says with a smile "I am the only one without a title" (meaning that she is not a monk or a religious sister). She was there to receive us and show us around. I wish I had a salesperson half her talents and enthusiasm, the books authored by me would have spread far and wide.

"Hey, that is my book", I exclaimed with pleasant satisfaction. My book the *Western Missions among the Assyrians* was there on the shelf. I was delighted to note that I am the only author from India whose book was in her famous *ICON And Book Service*. There were two copies of *St. Thomas Encyclopaedia* edited by Prof. George Menachery in which I wrote the article on the Church of the East,

Ellaine appeared to be unhappy with her book dealings in India. She says "it is very difficult to do business with India." Nobody replies letters promptly. Even

payments they do not acknowledge. They do not post books on time. If the books do reach the Bookstore after passing through all the hurdles, they are not properly packed and hence not in a good condition”.

“It was good to know you personally, Ellaine. If Mar Narsai Press does not reply your enquiries, I shall personally see to it that you get my books”, I offered in all sincerity.

But whether my books especially the humour books and the travelogues can “assist in the deepening of religious piety and in the increased knowledge of the things of God,” is a debatable point.

Chapter 9

Chicago

Patriarch Mar Adhāi II of Bagdad flew from Amman, Jordan to California. After visiting the Assyrians in July 1995 the Patriarch flew to Chicago. When he heard about my arrival in Washington D. C., he telephoned me asking me to go over to Chicago to meet him and to discuss about Church affairs.

Flight fares for week-end is expensive in the U. S. A. There is no difference in flight charges in India if I fly on Monday or Saturday. Another information I gathered was that tickets are cheaper if I buy in advance. But in India the cost is the same regardless of the time I buy the ticket. It is about \$ 100 or Rs. 3,100 for a flight from Cochin to Bombay. There is also difference in fare between stand-by ticket and the confirmed ticket in America.

"How much it costs to fly to Chicago?" was my simple question at the United Airlines office in Washington D. C. The answer was not easy. She wanted to know what day I wanted to fly. What time of the day I had to go. Even after answering all her queries, she did not know the answer to my simple question. She fed all my answers to her computer and waited for a quarter of an hour.

I could not believe the time it took to get an answer. I thought that with the help of the computer she would know the answer faster. It seemed that a clerk at the sales counter could calculate faster the fare between Washington D. C. and Chicago. If so, I wondered what was the use of all the modern gadgets. Perhaps my question was not that simple in the American context where there is great demand for travel on week-ends and where there is intense competition between the airlines.

At O'hare airport in Chicago, Dinkha Oraha from Glenview was waiting for me. He had seen off Bishop Ammanuel Elia to San Francisco half an hour earlier from the same airport. I had a paper bag with my books and one set of Hudra which I was carrying for a Ph D student at Harvard. The Hudra books are heavy (5 Kgs per set of 3 volumes) and so the paper bag was damaged soon after it reached the airport.

My stay with Dinkha Oraha was pleasant. Both his daughters Linda and Lydia were always ready to give me water or Diet Coke or tea or whatever I wanted. Lydia is the younger one and looks only 5 or 6 years old. She insisted that I should talk with Patriarch Mar Adhai II in Indian language. I said a few words in Malayalam and the Patriarch responded in Aramaic. Lydia was smart enough to realise that we were fooling her.

Lydia's maternal grandfather was there. I was amazed at the beautiful Hindi he could speak. He learned Hindi from the Indians who were working with him in Iraq oil company. He is related to the Patriarch.

Linda the older one asked about the Indian movie star Amitab Bachan. "The Hindi movies are very popular in

Iraq'', recalled Linda's mother. I was also impressed by the high standard of English they spoke. I had the wrong impression that most of the Assyrians speak only their forefathers' language and are unable to comprehend English. I do not know however the percentage of the Assyrians who can speak English well.

In the Church service on Sunday August 20th I read the Gospel lesson in modern Syriac. Usually I do it in the old language which is known as *lishana Atieqa*. But I know that many Assyrians do not know the liturgical language well. The alternative was to read the Gospel in English. But I was afraid that a sizable number of the Assyrians would not comprehend English. Hence I practised reading modern Assyrian. I knew that it would not be as good as the old language which I have been reading for evening prayers in India for the past four decades.

My sermon was in English. Every time I expressed my hope that during my next trip I would preach in their language. I know that will not be easy. I do not hear anybody speak Assyrian in India. If I live in the company of the Assyrian people for six months I will have the confidence to converse in that language.

The choir of female voices under the leadership of Mrs. Esmar Mazdi is doing an excellent job. On last two visits nobody was playing the organ. Now a young lady played the organ during the service. The choir can play a significant role to make Sunday worship more meaningful and attractive.

Deacon Joseph Zaya was there. He is nearing ninety years of age. In 1993 two old deacons were present in

the Church. Deacon Zaya and Deacon Geevarghese Benjamin of Ashitha, who was 92 years old. He passed away soon after my visit. I was sorry to hear that the son-in-law of Deacon Geevarghese namely Klemis M. Ganji too passed away, by a massive heart attack recently.

Klemis Ganji had arranged for my interview in August 1993 at the *Quala d Athoraye* (Voice of the Assyrians). Despite the sad and sudden death of the owner of this Assyrian radio programme, I am glad to know that Minas Gorgius who had interviewed me on the radio for the live broadcast on Monday August 30, 1993 is continuing the broadcast. It is aired every evening from 6 to 7 p. m. on radio WONX 1590.

Jelu is a strong tribe of warriors. Deacon Joseph Zaya is strong like any other Jelu tribeman. At the time of my consecration in September 1968 he was living in Syria and was my interpreter in Bagdad, I told the deacon that I was happy to learn in Washington that his daughter's son Peter Jassim had participated in the Syriac Symposium II held at Washington D. C. on June 8-10. Our youngsters should show interest in the study of our heritage. With various possibilities available in America our Church members should learn to share with non-Assyrians the great truths taught by our fathers in the language which our Lord Jesus Christ spoke. I had met before Peter Jassim, son of Khoshaba Jassim, when I spoke at the Ashurbanipal library in Chicago in August 1988.

Two young deacons had assisted me this time in addition to Qasha Awiqam Pithyou and a senior deacon.

The young deacons were ordained only on the previous Sunday, August 13th 1995 by Mar Ammanuel Elia Episcopa, who had come from California to Chicago. Although one young deacon expressed his fear to read the Epistle in the Qurbana, he was encouraged and compelled by others. And he did a good job. These teenagers should be congratulated for the willingness to serve the Church through priesthood. Some will be ordained as priests. But others can assist at the altar or in the choir serving as life-long deacons.

Khoshaba Jajji took me to his wife's house. It was nice to meet the young and the old gathered there. I wish I had more time to visit individually all these good people of the Church. Some of them had known me from the time of my consecration in Bagdad in September 1968. Twenty seven years have passed. Yet the memories of those events are fresh in the minds of many Assyrians.

My first visit to our Parish in Chicago was in 1984. I visited the parish again in 1988 and in 1991 and 1992. My last visit to this congregation was two years ago when I celebrated Qurbana on Saturday 28th and Sunday 29th August, 1993. Mar Narsai Metropolitan who is now back in Iraq had been in Chicago for nearly two years then.

Alex Paul is my Assyrian friend in Chicago since 1967 when I stayed in his home with his parents Margaret and Paul. His father passed away, many years ago, but his mother lives alone. Alex often visits his old mother. During my last visit to Chicago in 1993 when I visited Alex we had hoped that during the next trip he would take me to his old mother as he did during my 1991 visit.

Unfortunately this time I did not get time even to meet Alex. I telephoned to Alex and expressed hope that we would meet during my next trip. He said that there was an Indian living across his street and he was longing to meet me. I do not think that Alex's Indian neighbour was from South India. I may not be able to speak his Indian language as there are many.

Thomasulas are my friends who had adopted John and Annie from the Mar Thimotheus Memorial Orphanage in Trichur. They always remember with gratitude my mother Mrs J. D. Mookan who had not only donated her land to found this orphanage in 1962 but also laboured hard for the past 33 years. Even at 80 her devotion to the institution has gained the appreciation of many in India and abroad. I wished to meet with my mother's "children" in Chicago area as we met in 1991 and 1992. But as in 1992 I telephoned to them and regretted that we didn't have time to meet with each other.

Polly Reuling and her two adopted children Mary and Alice live in Waterloo, Iowa. But they rushed to Chicago to join my mother's "children" in Chicago in 1993. These two girls were in the orphanage a year ago when they studied in Kodaikanal, South India for an academic year and Polly Reuling taught and kept company to her adopted children. Mary's studies in India did not become any handicap for her studies in America. This year she was given award for obtaining excellent grade, i.e. A- and above in all her courses in the Xth standard.

CHAPTER 10

Boston, Mass

My visit to Boston was in connection with the XII International Congress of the Society for the Law of the Eastern Churches which was held for the first time in the U. S. A. This society which was formed in Rome in 1969 has its secretariat in Vienna, Austria. It is a fellowship of Eastern Churches, both Catholic and non-Catholic. By non-Catholic I mean the Orthodox Churches and not the Protestant Churches.

I had read a paper in the Congress held in Freiburg, Germany in 1983. It was about the authority of a bishop in the Assyrian Church of the East. Now after 12 years they invited me to read a paper, "Order and Grades of Order in the Tradition of the Ancient Apostolic Church of the East." I read a paper of 24 typed pages.

Since it was 45 minutes allotted for each paper, I had to rush when it came towards the conclusion. I was slow at the beginning because two interpreters (French & German) were doing their work simultaneously. I was listening attentively whether interpreters have finished their work. Since the papers were available to the interpreters in advance they had read the papers. Hence it was easier for them.

The Congress was held in the Hellenic College and Holy Cross Greek Orthodox School of Theology. In India "School" meant an educational institution teaching children upto the High School. Those who complete 15 years of age do not go to "School". They go to College. This School of Theology is what we would call in India "Theological College."

Hellenic College is an independent Co-educational institution affiliated to the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of North and South America. It was founded in Pomfret, Connecticut in 1937. It was moved to the 52-acre campus in Brookline, Massachusetts in 1946. It is the suburb of Boston which has 65 Colleges and universities. They maintain the campus neat and clean. The cost for a student per year is \$25,000. They charge \$11,855 for a regular student and \$9,755 a Seminarian student. A part funding is available for the qualified Seminarists from the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese.

My stay in this campus was pleasant. An apartment with kitchen, refrigerator, micro-wave oven etc. was at my disposal. I had learned in Washington, the previous week, how to use a micro-wave oven. It helped me to make some hot water with fenguken seed powder in addition to my regular humulin insulin which I was injecting daily to control my diabetes.

I needed that extra control because I was eating a small fruit or cookies occasionally. My room had a basket full of apples, oranges and bananas. I looked at the beautiful apples like Adam looked when Eve showed one. Although I took one apple I resisted the temptation and put it back in the fruit basket. I ate a banana instead; which I guessed to be less harmful for my diabetes.

Professor Lewis J. Patsavos, who was the convener of this Congress took care of the arrangements very well. He is an American Greek Orthodox who is a professor of Canon Law in this Seminary. At the airport I was met by Fr. Savos and his wife who took me to the apartment in the Campus. All people were courteous to a stranger like me. I was one of the two Indian delegates, the other one was Fr. Xavier Koodapuzha, a Syro-Malabar priest who is a Professor in the St. Thomas Apostolic Seminary in Vadavathoor, Kottayam.

There were two other Indians Fr. George Nedungatt S. J. who is a professor of Canon Law at the Pontifical Oriental Institute in Rome. Fr. Alphonse C. M. I. who is working near Frankfurt in Germany is another Keralite. Fr. Alphonse did not have a paper to read but he had been an active member of this society for many years.

“Were you ever studying at Harvard?” asked professor George Bebis of this Seminary on Sunday after the inaugural session. I said, “No, I never studied in Harvard University. I have visited that place of fame once, in 1977. I studied in Princeton.” He looked disappointed and went away.

Next day onwards I began to search for George Bebis who had attended with me the Summer Course of the Young Theologians held at the Ecumenical Institute in Bossey, near Geneva, Switzerland in 1962. He was then writing a Ph.D. dissertation on Nestorius at the University of Athens, Greece. I was returning after my one-year-study in England. I was a deacon then and therefore did not have a beard. So Dr. George Bebis would not recognize me.

On my last day of the conference George Bebis appeared in the Congress. As I had been enquiring after him all those days of the Congress, one delegate asked me, "Did you meet your old friend Professor George Bebis?" When I replied in the negative he pointed to the man who was standing near me talking to somebody else. I interrupted and asked him, "Are you George Bebis?." He said "Yes."

"I am the Nestorian deacon who was with you at Bossey in 1962", reminded I of our association in 1962. "Was it in Bossey that we had got acquainted? I was searching for you. In fact I asked you on the first day itself. But you said that you were not the one who had studied in Harvard."

During 1962-68 we had occasionally corresponded with each other, first as Deacon Mookan and later as Fr. George Mookan. Perhaps after I had become a bishop in Sept. 1968 and returned to India I couldn't keep track of him. Both of us had grown older during the past 33 years since we met in 1962. It was not easy to recognize each other. Moreover, I have a beard too, which makes identification more difficult.

During the Congress, we had the opportunity to attend receptions accorded to us by the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese, the Roman Catholic Archdiocese, the Lieutenant Governor of Boston etc. I gave my humour book to Bishop Methodius as well as to the Catholic Cardinal. When we were received formally at the State House, the Governor was out of station. That is why the Lt. Governor was there to receive us. The young politician was very cordial in his words of welcome to the international delegates.

The State House is one of the tourists' attractions in Boston. Free tours were available from 10 a. m. to 4 p. m. on Monday-Friday to places like the Senate Chamber, the House of Representatives, the Hall of flags and portraits of governors. I had visited these places in 1977.

This was designed by Charles Bulfinch, the famous 18th century architect. This State House was built on the land that was bought from the John Hancock family. The cornerstone was laid by Samuel Adams and Paul Revere. The golden dome of this State House is one of the land-marks of Boston.

Boston is a historic city. There are 16 historical sites telling the story of America during the past three centuries. The scholars and politicians from Boston have influenced considerably the course of events in the life not only of the state of Massachusetts but the whole of America.

The famous Harvard University is in Cambridge, the suburb of Boston. Many Prime Ministers and the Presidents have studied at Harvard. As Professor Patsavos "boasted" about Boston, and about the prominent persons who studied there I added one more person Rahul Gandhi, the only son of Rajiv Gandhi who was Prime Minister of India like Rajiv's mother Mrs. Indira Gandhi, the only offspring of the first Prime Minister of India, Jawaharlal Nehru. Rahul Gandhi has just graduated from Harvard after spending the past 4 or 5 years there. It is not much publicised either in America or in India for security reason.

As his father and grand mother were assassinated, India is much concerned about the safety of this young

man. He is not interested in entering politics. Yet security men always accompany him. The millions of rupees spent daily for security of V. I. P. s and their families pose staggering figures when we think of the poverty prevailing in some parts of India. Although most political pundits would describe Rahul Gandhi as the one who would not be Prime Minister, nobody is able to predict that his sister Priyanka Gandhi would not be part of the Nehru legacy.

At Harvard University I walked to the Divinity Avenue to visit the Department of Near Eastern studies where my friend Dr. J. F. Coakley was working. Dr. Coakley and his wife Professor Sarah Coakley had gone to their home in England. In New England and this American Cambridge they are only recent arrivals. As Dr. Coakley was away in Oxford for summer vacation he had asked Matthias Henze from Germany who was doing a Ph. D. at Harvard to take care of me if I visited his department. The previous night I had telephoned to the house of Matthias Henze. But the taped message informed that he had gone to the Church. I hoped that the next day he would be available in the Department. I was disappointed to know that he had gone for a vacation with his family.

“Can I leave it here for him. These books (3 volumes of *Hudra*, the prayer book in Syriac language) are heavy. They weigh 5 Kg?” I enquired at the office. The receptionist was happy to oblige. I felt relieved when I left the Hudra and a copy of the latest issue of the *Voice of the East* at the reception desk with a note hurriedly written to Matthias Henze.

After visiting the Harvard University we went to the famous Trinity Church. This Church, dedicated on October 17, 1733, belongs to the Episcopal Church. The pulpit inside the Church has carvings of great preachers such as St. Paul, St. Chrysostom, Martin Luther, Bishop Latimer and Phillips Brooks.

The Gallery Organ built in 1925 and rebuilt in 1963 as well as the new Chancel Organ built in 1963 together comprise 6,898 pipes varying in length from 32 feet to less than one inch.

After visiting this old Church we passed through the area where the Pope conducted Holy Communion during his pontifical visit to Boston, as the Roman Catholics did not have a huge Church to accommodate large crowds of the faithful.

The Old South Meeting House built in 1729 still stands in Boston attracting the tourists. That place which was a Puritan meeting house became the place where the Boston Tea Party began. Today we can hear there the fiery debates that led to the decision to dump the tea into Boston Harbor.

At noon the delegates got out of our bus at the Quincy Market. We were given two hours to eat any food of our choice. Restaurants of different ethnic groups were there. We three Indians walked around. I saw a computer with the family history of most major families in the world. I checked the list to find whether Mookan family was listed. I couldn't find it there. I was not disappointed because I did not expect Mookan family to be known to the researchers of Boston. The nearest

to the Mookan family I could find was Moogan and Moojen. If it were listed there, we can purchase a print out of our family. It is an interesting and useful service. But it need not be related to our family even if the name is the same. There could be coincidence between the names of two entirely different families in different continents without any relation whatsoever, between them. What is in a name?

The Quincy market is an excellent example of utilising old existing structures in modern times. We quickly walked through the stores and shops, food markets and the beautiful boutiques watching the entertainments and exhibits. Some of us brought post cards with pictures. One shop sold two for a dollar. Other shops demanded two dollars for three picture cards. A post office too was functioning in the vicinity for those who wanted to post the picture cards as soon as they are purchased.

The nearby water front at the Boston Harbor was a cooling agent in that summer noon. I wandered for a few minutes enjoying the cool breeze from one of the oldest American ports. We were amazed by the frequency of the aeroplanes coming to and going from the nearby airport. Fr. Alphonse says it was three planes per minute. I did not verify the veracity of that claim.

Rev. Abraham Thomas is a Professor of Sociology at Bridgewater College. He has been teaching in the same college for the past 27 years. I knew him in Bangalore in 1964 when he came from Boston to do research in Bangalore. He was a Deacon then. Now he is the co-episcopa (Chor Bishop) of the Knanite Syrian Orthodox Church. (an ethnic community in Kerala which

traces its origin back to the Syrian merchant Thomas of Cana who migrated from Syria to Kerala in 345 A. D.) He is now Vicar General for the Knanite Churches in the U. S. A. He is well settled in a new house he built in Raynham, a suburb of Boston. Dr. Abraham Thomas and his wife Shantamma live there. His two sons who were small when I visited them in 1977 are engineers and employed. His daughter has commenced her studies for a 7-year Medical programme.

Alpha Charitable Foundation is a charitable society with which Fr. Abraham Thomas is connected as the Chairman of the Board of Directors in the U. S. A. The actual brain behind this foundation is Dr C Joseph Kurian M. Sc., Ph. D., Chairman of the Board of Directors in Don Mills, Ontario, Canada. This foundation raises funds from Indians as well as Americans to build a super speciality hospital to be known as Messengers of Love Hospital in St. George Hill, Channanikadu near Kottayam, Kerala.

Streeter Stuart was my friend. In 1992 I had telephoned to him from New Jersey and told him that I did not get time to visit him in Boston as I did in 1977 and 1988. I had promised to meet him in a future visit. But he passed away in 1993. This was my first visit to the Boston area after his death. I made it a point to visit his widow Merle and daughter Twyla Stuart who had studied for B. D. (now known as M. Div degree) at Princeton Theological Seminary while I was doing my Doctor of Theology degree there in 1967-68.

Merle Stuart is 91 years old. So it was difficult for her to mow the grass in the lawn in the 4-acre-land where

they live. She says the taxes are very high for a widow who does not work for salary. So she sold the house where I had stayed in my previous trips. They have recently purchased a smaller house (less taxes).

The new house is closer to Twyla's second brother Dr. Douglas Stuart who is a Professor of Old Testament in the Gordon Cornwell Theological Seminary. In 1977 Dr. Douglas Stuart had provided me an opportunity to address the student body of this Seminary.

Twyla's eldest brother Streeter Stuart Jr. had preached in the Chaldean Syrian High School grounds in 1975. To renew my friendship Twyla tried to telephone him but he was not home. Streeter Stuart Sr. was as old as my father but had shown me love and respect. He is the author of the Foreword to the first volume of my autobiography *Strange But True*.

Another house I needed to visit was that of Paul J. Ollukaren who had moved from Madras in India to Malden in Massachusetts last year. I had conducted his marriage with Nimmy and the baptism of his son Nikhil known as the Nicky for short. He desired that I should baptise his second son, the American-born baby. Since I did not have a deacon to assist me for the Holy Qurbana and Baptism I did only House baptism by pouring water on the head of the baby after reciting the Lord's Prayer. A proper baptism can be done in India when they visit their home in Trichur. The Keralites settling abroad never sever their ties with folks back home.

Baby Thomas came in his car with his two young sons. The home of Baby Thomas is in front of our Church

in Marutichal. Therefore he had seen me. He does not belong to my denomination (he is a Catholic), and I never had occasion to know him. Baby Thomas and the families of his younger brother and sister were all in the U. S. A. Baby Thomas gave me a ride to Paul Ollukaren's house from the Seminary in Brookline. He invited me to visit his home during my next visit.

Dr. Thomas Mathew and his wife Lalitha live near Boston. When I met them in Rugby, England in May 1994 during my niece Maya's wedding I got acquainted with them. Dr. Thomas Mathew was a classmate of my brother-in-law Dr. N. V. George, in the Medical College in Trivandrum in the 1950s. But their friendship is very close. When I telephoned to him after reaching Boston I was told that he was on a holiday and so I missed the opportunity to meet him.

As a matter of fact I did not have enough time to meet other Kerala friends. I did not also get time to read in the libraries of Boston and Harvard. I had a friend of my Bangalore student years, Professor Leroy S. Rouner at Boston University. There was no time even to give him a ring. Dr. Margaret Shatkin who earned two doctorates was my classmate in Princeton in 1967-68. She teaches in Boston College or some such place. In my previous visit Twyla had taken me to her office. I slipped a note through her office door as she was away. This time I could not do anything like that.

On 25 August 1995 Mr. Dmitri from the Greek Orthodox Theological Seminary drove Monsignor Mounizyar, Archbishop of the Syrian Catholic Church (West Syrian) from Syria and me to the Logan Airport in

Boston. The United Express Aircraft for this flight to J. F. K. airport in New York was a small one. About ten rows of three seats each. There were only about 25 passengers for this 40-minute flight.

When I reached J. F. K. airport, two Kerala friends greeted me. The lady is from Kozhenchery and the man is from Mannar. They talked with me and asked me to bless them. They work in the airport. They gave me directions to go to the international terminal using the free shuttle bus plying to the various terminals.

I wanted to send a letter to Fr Diodoros Mukhti of Canada. But there was no Post Office in the J. F. K. airport. One office was kind enough to sell me a stamp for 32 cents. But later I understood that 32 cents would not be sufficient for CANADA. One man showed me the stamp-selling machine into which I should put four coins of 25 cents in order to get 60 cents stamp or 2 stamps of 32 cents.

I had just two coins of 25 cents. I was advised to go to the bank in the area. Finally I managed to get four quarters for a dollar. I dropped four quarters one by one. Then I could hear the clinging noise of the coins falling to the return area. I desperately tried again. The machine didn't work. I asked for help. One policeman advised me that I should try at the bank. I went to the bank again and asked, "Could I possibly buy a postal stamp somewhere?". They were helpful. They said, "You could perhaps try in the bookstore". Yes, it worked. They had stocked a few postal stamps. I had to pay a service charge.

Still it was cheaper and quicker than carrying the envelope with me back to India and posting it there.

I hope that this bookstore will stock some more postal stamps until they repair that machine or begin a small post office somewhere near the J. F. K. international airport. I suppose that they have a post office in some other terminal, other than the terminal building (No. 2?) where the United Airlines, British Airways and several other flights depart for international destinations.

The United Airlines flight left New York for London around 10 50 p.m. We flew straight to London's Heathrow airport where we reached Saturday morning. My connecting flight was around noon. It was an Air India flight to Bombay via New Delhi. I had a few minutes rest to wash my face and to get my boarding pass from Air India counter. If my connecting flight were with the same airlines, even if it was in a different aircraft, I would have got my boarding pass for London-Bombay sector even at New York.

After obtaining my boarding pass from Air India counter I noticed that there was some more time left for the departure. I telephoned my sister in Rugby. I did not have British money. So I decided to make a collect call. I dialled "O" for operator and requested for a collect call. The operator (which was a recorded voice) was stubborn. It would not listen to me. The recorded messages repeated that I should deposit coins now. But I knew that my American coins were worthless there. Finally I went to the Bank and changed two dollars for British coins and dialled my sister's telephone number. But the area code had "1" added to it at the beginning to establish the connection. Thank God, the recorded voice of the operator detected my mistake and instructed me properly. Sometimes it appears that computers have

good brain. I have not got a grasp of how the recorded voices or computers function. It was good to talk to my sister whom I had met seven weeks earlier at Columbus, Ohio, U. S. A.

Next call was to Eshaya Chemmani, my long time friend and host in Ealing, London. Within few minutes I talked about my visit to the U. S. A. etc. While calling to Rugby I had deposited 50 cents, but to Ealing I deposited only 20 cents as it was near and in the same area code as the Heathrow airport. I had to carefully watch how my credit diminishes. When it came down to one I closed the conversation. Perhaps it will be good to introduce some signal lights even in home telephones for people to know how much money they used up. Both the young and the old use lots of money for telephone calls not realising how much they use up for each conversation.

Before we reached New Delhi the cabin crew began to serve fruit juice. My watch had Indian time. The lights in the aircraft had been dimmed. I looked at my watch pressing the small key to provide the light. But I switched into 24 hours, instead of the regular 12 hour count. Thus my watch showed 22.20 which was 10.20 p. m. I thought it was 12.20 a. m. Therefore I declined juice, and later dinner was brought to me. A steward asked me why I was not eating. Do I need something special? I was beginning my fast beginning 12 midnight, for the Sunday Qurbana.

Air India always has vegetarian food in addition to the normal non-vegetarian. Other foreign airlines never serve vegetarian unless ordered 24 hours prior to the

scheduled departure time. Some passengers forget and do not know this stipulation. Therefore they quarrel with the crew. But the cabin crew are helpless. They can serve the regular food and special meals brought to the aircraft, ordered 24 hours earlier.

When I told them that it was Sunday morning, they said, "No, sir. It is Saturday evening." I looked at my watch again, which I switched back to 12 hour count. It was 12.20 a. m. It is 20 minutes after midnight in India, as I had not changed my Indian time during this short (two-week is short for a foreign trip) visit abroad.

As we had not reached New Delhi, we were somewhere over the Pakistan air space, I guessed. Pakistan is half an hour behind India. Therefore there were ten minutes more to be midnight and I could very well eat at 11.50 p. m. and I told them that I would thence fast to prepare for the Sunday morning service. They said, "We should have served you earlier if you had told us about this fasting before Sunday service." Air India claims that they give "Maharajah" treatment to their passengers. I must admit the stewards were courteous.

At New Delhi we did not have to walk out of the aircraft. Many passengers deplaned in the nation's capital and some domestic passengers joined us. Before 5 a. m. we reached Bombay. Owing to the trouble of equipments, it took nearly one hour for our baggage to appear on the conveyer belt.

Actually we passed through the immigration quicker because some of the passengers in our flight were from New Delhi. They did not require immigration control.

They walked away like V. I. P. s But we did not grumble much, because there were no other flights when we arrived. Sometimes two or three flights would come in half an hour time and the queues at the immigration counters would be long.

Courtesy coaches are available by Indian Airlines and many other private airlines plying between the domestic and international airports in Bombay. Many passengers have no knowledge of this free service. I could not make use of this free transportation as I was to rush to the house of Mr. K. P. Timothy of Popular Automobiles for a quick bath and dash to the Methodist Centre at Byculla. Immediately after the Holy Qurbana I went straight to the domestic airport.

After check-in and obtaining the boarding pass I waited for the final call for boarding, after passing through the security area. I sat down for a few minutes of relaxation. I had not slept properly for the past two nights since I had left Boston on Friday noon. Had I reached early morning on that day I could have slept for a couple of hours. Now without rest and after celebrating Holy Qurbana which means a lot of kneeling and prostrating, I could wish for a nap in the flight. But the boarding announcement never came. I closed my eyes for a few minutes.

I really slept sitting on a plastic chair. I wish that airport replaced those plastic chairs with more comfortable sofas with cushions so that passengers could relax better. The danger of comfortable seats in the waiting rooms dawned soon. Even without comfortable seats I was

asleep when the boarding announcement came over the loud speakers.

A few minutes after I awoke, I saw my fellow passengers still sitting there. I thought that they were all waiting for the same flight. But they were passengers to other destinations.

When I heard the final call for boarding, I rushed to the policeman. He said that my flight was not ready for boarding yet. I checked the TV monitors. My flight was not in the monitor.

“Mar Aprem, report immediately” was the announcement over the microphone. A staff of the Jet Airways came looking for me. The flight was about to depart. They noticed that one passenger was missing. They checked the passengers’ list and found out my name. I rushed to the aircraft before they closed the door and took off.

When I reached Calicut, my driver was waiting for me. I rushed to Trichur, a drive of $2\frac{1}{2}$ hours, if we are not slow,

As a result of the increasing road accidents the police are warning the drivers to go slow and with caution.

I needed to get to Trichur to attend the reception to the Roman Catholic Archbishop, Mar Joseph Kundukulam who was elevated to archiepiscopal rank in the recently upgraded diocese of Trichur. I reached the Metropolitan Cathedral premises just at the time when my name was mentioned during the welcome speech.

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Chapter 3

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Ninth visit to England in June 1995, Dr. Andrew Palmer. Telephone call from London. Assyrian friends receiving me at Heathrow on 12 June 1995. My sister Sushila and family with a Birthday cake on June 12th night. On June 13th Varkey and Tresa taking me to S. O. A. S. Sitar music. Joachim Persoon. Kerala evening. Orthodox Church. Catholic nuns of St. Benedicts at Brighton. Sr. Asha from Pattikad. Mother Mary Garson. Mr. Brownrigg. 55th birthday. Rev. Aby T. Mamen. Fr. Skariah of Orthodox Church in London. Uzzier Khazal. William Dalrymple. B. B. C. Ayodhya. Dr. Palmer's home in Oxford. Fr. Robert Murray.

Chapter 4

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Aprem library function in the afternoon. Lincoln Isaac. Prof. Hamilton Hess. Jokes. Fr. Oshana Kanon Dr. Davy Emmatty. Gracy and Liza. Flying to San Diego by the South West Airline: Jose Mookken, Lalu, Miki, Mia and Tony. Indian guests for dinner. Howard Wells. Accu-Check Advantage by Boehringer Mannheim.

Chapter 5

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Chapter 6

Atlanta to Columbus pages 74-89

Arrival in Atlanta airport. Baggage. Addison. Half a million Indians in America Indians generally educated. 134th rank. Soccer. Grace Marie editor-in-Chief of Oracle. Maya Chandrasekharan. Centennial Olympic stadium. Ticket to Olympic Games of 1996 Sitar. Indian friends. Syrian Orthodox priest. House blessing. On 30 June drive to sister's house.

Columbus, Ohio

Rare get-together of five of us, brothers and sisters. Wedding of Asha and Paul. Rev. Thomas York of Broad Street Presbyterian Church. Alesha Jacob. Wedding rehearsal. Paul's sisters Laura and Catherine. Bible lessons read by four cousins of the bride. Personal vows recited jointly after the ceremony. Photographs. Ride in house carriage: Dinner. Aprem Mookan. Dance. Teheran wedding. Jayalalitha's foster son Sudhakaran's wedding extravaganza. Aeroplane wedding, submarine wedding. Sebi Paul. Death of Babu Konikara.

Chapter 7

World Malayalee Convention pages 90-95

Geevarghese Emmatty: Columbus to JFK airport. Driven to Raddison Hotel, Somerset, N. J. by Miki and Munna, sons of Geevarghese. Thomas Abraham and other organizers of the convention. Dr. Mary Kunnamkeril. Introduced at Public meeting. My Princeton days. Beauty Pageant. Miss Malayalee World, Tina Philip. Dance of Milne, younger sister of Miki and Munna Emmatty. Dr. James Raphael and wife Elsy. Rushdie's book. *The Satanic Verses*. Ignatius Nallengara. Take off from JFK for the return journey, along with the fireworks of July 4th.

Chapter 8

Washington Via Paris pages 96-104

August 13. Sunday service at Mar Qardagh Church, Madras. Mar Thoma Matriculation Higher Secondary

School. Cost of land, eggs and such. Air France flight from Bombay to Paris. Change to United Airlines from Paris to Washington. Different zones in the U. S. A. Stay in Washington. Stay with Dr. Jonathan Sanford, Carol & three daughters. Catholic University of America. Sidney Griffith, Monica Blanchard. Women Bishops. Francis Asbury.

ICON & Book Service, Ellaine.

Chapter 9

Chicago pages 105-110

Patriarch Mar Adhai II. Ohare airport. Dinkha Orah. Lydia & Linde. Deacon Joseph Zaya. *Qala d' Athoraye*. Sermon in English. New deacons. Koshaba Gajji. Alex Paul. Thomasulas. Polly Reuling.

Chapter 10

Boston, Mass pages 111-127

XIIth International Congress. Hellenic College. Prof. Patsavos. Prof. George Bebis. Visit to Harvard University. Dr. Coakley. Matthias Henze. Quincy Market. Fr. Abraham Thomas. Alpha Charitable Foundation. Streeter Stuart. Paul Ollukaran. Baby Thomas. Dr. Thomas Mathew. Return through JFK airport. Transit through London. Stop in Delhi. Arrival in Bombay.



At Dallas, Texas. 23 June 95. Standing left to right:
George Jacob, Maya, Rajamma, Dr. Jacob.

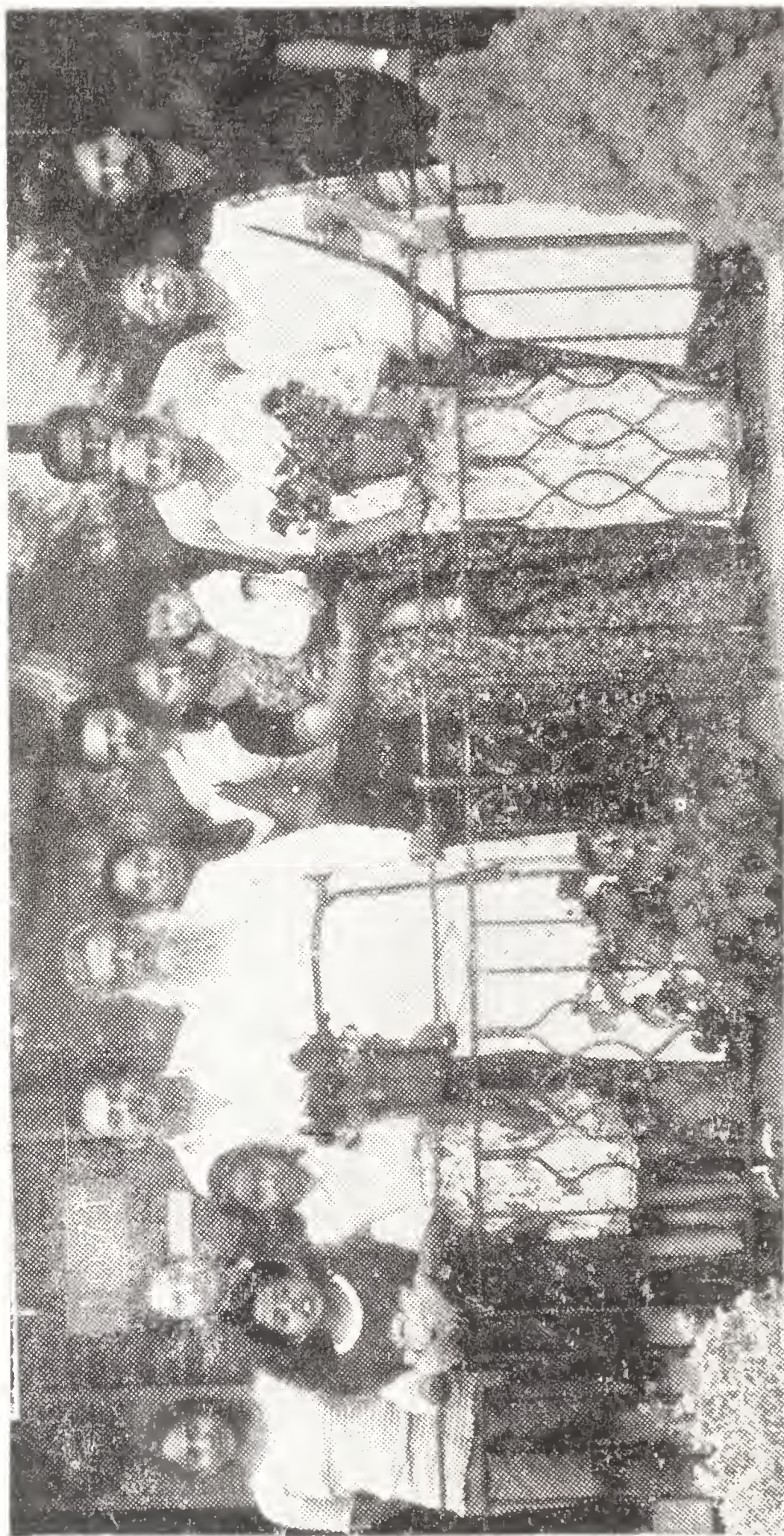


San Diego. After blessing the house of
Miriam & Tony. Jose & Mar Ap:em.



At Malden near Boston. Paul J. Ollukaran family.

Mrs. Mary Pall.serry with her two sons and a daughter with their in-laws
and grand children in Canada.





Columbus, Ohio on 2nd July 95 : Lulu & Joe, Prof. Alex & Leela,
Mar Aprem, Mrs. Susheela, Addison & Molly.



Toronto. Fr. Diodoros Mukhti & Mar Aprem.



Boston. 20 August 95. Mar Aprém with dignitaries of the Congress of Canon Law of Oriental Churches.

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42. Poems & Prayers
43. Advanced Aramaic
44. Voice of the East (editorials)
45. Holy Humour

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



The Most Rev. Dr. Mar Aprēm (formerly George Mookan) was born in Trichur, Kerala, India, in June 1940. Educated in India, England and America, he specialised in the field of Church History. He was the president of the Church History Association of India.

Since 1968 he is the head of the Church of the East in India with his headquarters in Trichur. He is active in several religious and social organizations, all over India.

The author has read papers in academic conferences such as Symposium Syriacum in Goslar, West Germany in September 1980 and Holland in September 1984, International Congress on Oriental Canon Law in Freiburg, West Germany in September, 1983, and in the Ecumenical Symposium at Pro Oriente, Vienna in June, 1990.

His biography appears in the *International Who's Who of Intellectuals*, Vol. 6 Cambridge, The *International Directory of Distinguished Leadership*, First Edition, U. S. A. and others.

He was given 'Men of Achievement' Award of the International Biographical Centre, Cambridge, England in 1984 and the 'Medal of Merit' of the Coptic Orthodox Cultural Centre, Venice for his cultural and ecumenical achievements. His 36th book Laugh To Health is being published in Madras in November 1990.